



University of Chester



**This work has been submitted to ChesterRep – the University of Chester's
online research repository**

<http://chesterrep.openrepository.com>

Author(s): Mary Brophy

Title: Employee engagement: An evaluation of the impact of cultural change
initiatives at Kingsland Grange

Date: June 2010

Originally published as: University of Chester MBA dissertation

Example citation: Brophy, M. (2010). *Employee engagement: An evaluation of the
impact of cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange*. (Unpublished master's
thesis). University of Chester, United Kingdom.

Version of item: Submitted version

Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10034/108119>

Employee Engagement: an evaluation of the impact of cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange

Mary Brophy

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
University of Chester for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

Chester Business School

June 2010



Acknowledgements

Special thanks to my manager at Life Technologies, Iain Martin, who encouraged me to embark on the MBA and secured the appropriate funding.

Many thanks to my dissertation tutor Caroline Rowland and the members of my Learning support group; Dominique Gresty, Dan Bevan and Chris Barker for all the support and guidance provided throughout the year.

I am also extremely grateful to everyone who took part in the research interviews for giving up their precious time, in an ever busy work environment and also providing such open and honest responses, which made the research all the more interesting and certainly helped to maintain my enthusiasm for the subject.

Finally and most importantly, I must thank my family who have provided a constant source of encouragement and support.

Dedication:

This work is dedicated to Robert and Robert Thomas whose love and support have sustained and strengthened my commitment to this endeavour.

Abstract

This piece of work endeavours to explore whether cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange have impacted employee engagement and competitive advantage. It is underpinned by a review of contemporary literature relating to cultural change, employee engagement and competitive advantage, which enabled a conceptual model to be developed, presenting a hypothesised causal relationship of the factors concerned.

The validity of this model and the notion that cultural change influences employees' engagement levels and competitive advantage was tested using a single case study at Kingsland Grange. The research was conducted using a multi method approach, incorporating semi structured interviews, documentary research and observational data. The findings support the assertion made in the contemporary literature that successful, well managed change has the potential to enhance employee engagement and competitive advantage, with unsuccessful change having the potential to detrimentally impact on these factors. The research data also provided an insight into the effectiveness of the cultural change process and explored methods employed for dealing with resistance to change.

Declaration

This work is original and has not been submitted before for any other academic purpose.

All secondary sources are acknowledged.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Table of contents:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. Background to the research.....	13
1.2. Research question/issue.....	14
1.3. Research focus & conceptual framework.....	15
1.4. Justification for the research.....	15
1.5. Methodology.....	16
1.6. Outline of the chapters.....	17
1.7. Definitions.....	17
1.8. Summary.....	18

Chapter 2 – Literature review

2.1. Introduction.....	19
2.2. Cultural change.....	19
2.2.1. Strategic change and organisational culture.....	19
2.2.2. Types of change.....	21
2.2.3. Approaches to change.....	22
2.2.4. Responses to change.....	23
2.3. Employee engagement.....	27
2.4. Competitive advantage.....	33
2.5. Summary.....	36
2.6. Proposed conceptual model.....	37

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1. Introduction.	40
3.2. Philosophy	40
3.3. Axiology	41
3.4. Research approach	42
3.5. Research strategy	42
3.6. Research methods	43
3.6.1. Semi structured interviews	43
3.6.2. Documentary research	49
3.6.3. Observational research	50
3.6.4. Rejected methods	51
3.6.5. Limitations of methods	51
3.6.6. Triangulation and validity	52
3.7. Ethical considerations	53
3.8. Summary	54

Chapter 4 – Findings

4.1. Introduction	56
4.2. Case study background	56
4.3. Research findings	58
4.4. Semi structured interviews	58
4.4.1. Participant background	58
4.4.2. Interview responses	61

4.4.2.1. Factors affecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange.....	62
4.4.2.2. Impact of employee engagement on competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange.....	65
4.4.2.3. Impact of successful change at Kingsland Grange.....	66
4.4.2.4. Impact of unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange.....	73
4.5. Documentary research.....	78
4.5.1. Employee survey data.....	78
4.5.2. Employee turnover and absence.....	81
4.6. Observational research.....	82
4.7. Summary.....	83
Chapter 5 – Conclusions and implications	
5.1. Introduction.....	84
5.2. Critical evaluation of adopted methodology.....	84
5.3. Conclusions about research objectives.....	87
5.3.1. Contemporary thinking on cultural change and employee engagement, relating to competitive advantage.....	88
5.3.2. Investigation of the current approach to culture change at Kingsland Grange	89
5.3.3. Impact of cultural change on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange.....	92
5.4. Conclusions about the research question.....	94
5.5. Limitations.....	95
5.6. Opportunities for further research.....	96
Chapter 6 – Recommendations.....	97
Bibliography.....	98

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: Pilot semi structured interview format.....	105
Appendix 2: Pilot interview feedback.....	106
Appendix 3: Semi structured interview format.....	107
Appendix 4: Participant information sheet and consent form.....	109
Appendix 5: Example appointment request for interviews.....	111
Appendix 6: Timetable of interviews.....	112
Appendix 7: Raw data from semi structures interviews.	113

List of tables:

Table 1: Dealing with resistance in successful change efforts.....	70
Table 2: Employee survey engagement framework.....	79
Table 3: Relevance of CIPD (2010) Key drivers to Life Technologies employee survey Engagement framework.....	80
Table 4: Kingsland Grange labour turnover & absence figures.....	81
Table 5: Change agenda at Kingsland Grange from Jan to Apr 2010.....	82
Table 6: Force field analysis of changes at Kingsland Grange.....	83
Table 7: Semi structured interview timetable.....	112
Table 8: Interview participant information.....	113
Table 9: Relevance of CIPD (2010) key drivers to factors affecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange.....	114
Table 10: Relevance of the transformational elements to factors effecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange.....	114
Table 11: Relevance of the transformational elements to successful change at Kingsland Grange.....	114
Table 12: Factors influencing successful change at Kingsland Grange.....	115
Table 13: Relevance of the transformational elements to unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange.....	115
Table 14: Factors influencing unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange.....	115

List of figures:

Figure 1: Model demonstrating Research Focus & Conceptual Framework.....	15
Figure 2: The cultural web.....	20
Figure 3: Types of change.....	21
Figure 4: Kotter’s model of change.....	26
Figure 5: Model of the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement.....	27
Figure 6: Framework for understanding the elements of employee engagement.....	29
Figure 7: Engagement, Performance and Retention.....	31
Figure 8: Employee Engagement model.....	32
Figure 9: Causal model illustrating the interaction between factors relating to transformational change, employee engagement and competitive advantage.....	37
Figure 10: Gender of interview participants.....	59
Figure 11: Job grades of interview participants.....	59
Figure 12: Job role of participants – manager or team member status.....	60
Figure 13: Participants’ time with the organisation.....	60
Figure 14: Age range of participants.....	61
Figure 15: Relevance of CIPD (2010) Key drivers to factors effecting Employee Engagement at Kingsland Grange.....	63
Figure 16: Relevance of the transformational elements to factors effecting Employee Engagement at Kingsland Grange.....	64
Figure 17: Relevance of the transformational elements to successful change at Kingsland Grange.....	67

Figure 18: Factors influencing successful change at Kingsland Grange.....	69
Figure 19: Relevance of the transformational elements to unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange.....	74
Figure 20: Factors influencing unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange.....	75
Figure 21: Employee Survey Engagement framework.....	79

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background to the research

Organisations face the challenge of developing the appropriate strategy to remain competitive in an increasingly demanding marketplace. Business Strategy as defined by Porter (1980) is the division between companies attempting to achieve differentiation from the competition through distinctive levels of service, flexibility of product range or quality resulting in cost leadership (Paauwe and Boselie, 2003).

Many assert that a link between strategy and HRM (Human Resource Management) is essential, both in theory and practice, to achieve effective utilisation of the organisation's workforce and improve performance (Bin Othman, 1996), with the effective deployment of HRM (Human Resource Management) resulting in a powerful basis for competitive advantage (Barney 1995). Garavan et al (1995) hypothesize, that a growth in HR strategic focus comes from the notion of competitive advantage, promoted by Porter (1980). Whilst Barney & Wright's (1998) resource-based view captures the idea that human capital is key to competitive advantage. Therefore, themes in literature regarding HRM, support a link between employee engagement and competitive advantage.

Life Technologies is a global biotechnology tools company, which was created by the combination of the Invitrogen Corporation and Applied Biosystems in November 2008. This organisation has manufacturing facilities in several locations globally, including Kingsland Grange, Warrington, UK. The manufacturing sites need to be competitive within the internal business environment, to ensure they are an attractive option in terms of on going and potential new manufacture. The integration has resulted in functions from both original organisations competing to secure a place in the new company. This poses the pertinent strategic question; how does Kingsland Grange maintain, and moreover enhance, its competitive advantage within the Life Technologies organisation?

Kingsland Grange is establishing strategies to address this need and has identified cultural change initiatives and employee engagement as key aspects of this effort. The context of the changes currently planned, include:

- Pursuit of the Shingo prize – continuous improvement initiative
- Quality standards through supply to regulated markets, pursuit of ISO13485

Kingsland Grange is striving for differentiation in an increasingly competitive environment, which will be established, at least in part, through culture change initiatives.

1.2 Research question/issue

Have cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange enhanced employee engagement and competitive advantage?

Research aims:

The research aim was to evaluate the impact of cultural change initiatives on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange.

Research issues:

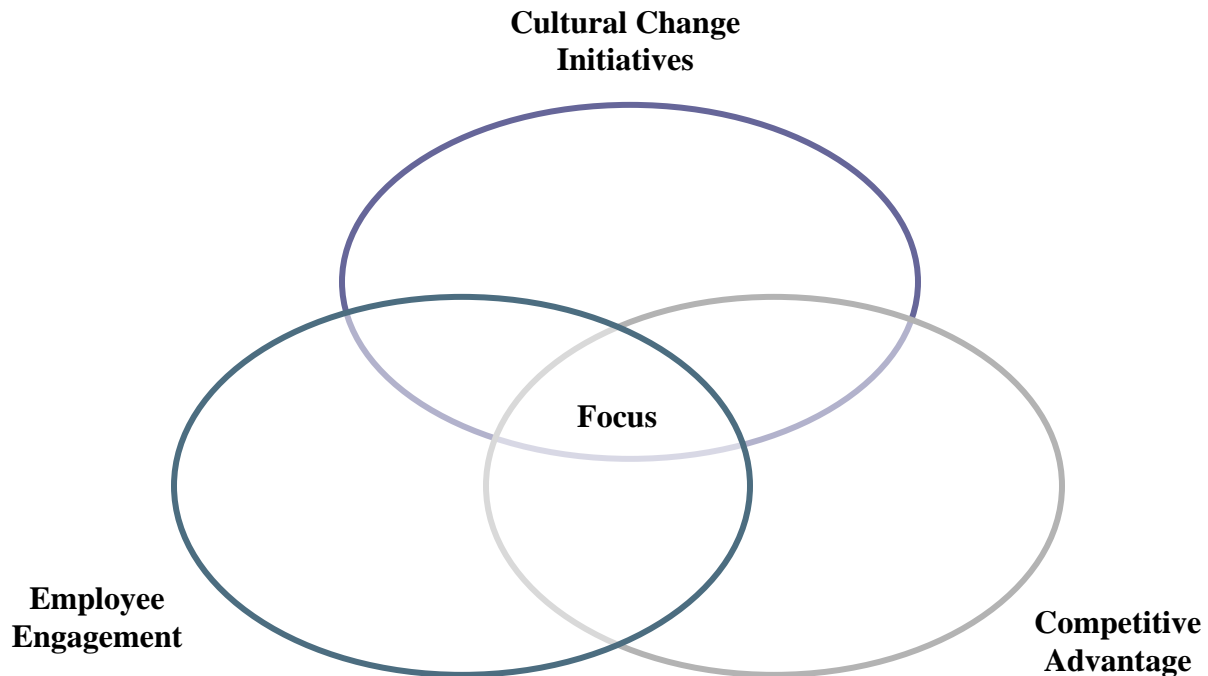
- Analyse and evaluate contemporary thinking on the relevant aspects of cultural change and employee engagement, relating to competitive advantage.
- Investigate the current approach to cultural change at Kingsland Grange
- Assess the impact of cultural change on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange and if appropriate make recommendations for improvement.

A contemporary literature review enabled a conceptual model to be developed, presenting a hypothesised causal relationship of the factors concerned. The validity of this model and the notion that cultural change influences employees' engagement levels and competitive advantage was tested using a single case study at Kingsland Grange.

1.3 Research focus & conceptual framework

This research focussed on the impact of cultural change initiatives on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange

Figure 1: Model demonstrating research focus & conceptual framework:



1.4 Justification for the research

The research can be justified from a theoretical standpoint, in that it contributes to the contemporary thinking on culture change and employee engagement. Although both subjects are well documented and some common themes can be identified, thus far, the relationship between the two has received limited attention.

Furthermore, from a practical perspective, the research has the potential to provide an evaluation of the culture change process and its impact on employee engagement at Kingsland Grange, which may result in recommendations for improvement that will enhance future progress.

1.5 Methodology

The research was approached from an interpretivist or phenomenological stance, which Saunders et al (2009) describe as an epistemology which advocates the necessity for researchers to understand the differences between humans in our roles as social actors.

Building on the concept that the research is an examination of social construct, the author adopted a subjectivist ontological viewpoint, which recognised that social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors, in a continual process, where the social phenomena are revised through the ongoing process of social interaction. (Saunders et al 2009).

The review of contemporary literature was used to contextualise the research and gain understanding, which included a review of established contextual models. The approach to the research was primarily inductive, which Saunders et al (2009) state involves gaining an understanding of the meaning humans attach to events. However, some aspects of deduction were also employed, particularly looking at the validity of selected theoretical frameworks in practice.

The data gathering was conducted utilising a case study approach, aspiring to gain a rich understanding of the context promised by Morris and Wood (1991), (Saunders et al 2009). The author utilised a multi method approach incorporating observation, semi structured interviews and where appropriate documentary research, to generate qualitative data utilising techniques and approaches recommended in the relevant literature. (Saunders et al 2009, Fisher 2007).

1.6 Outline of the chapters

The dissertation is formatted as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a detailed introduction to the work, documenting the research question and aims, with a brief insight into methodology and guidance as to how the dissertation will proceed.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed review of contemporary literature relating to culture change, employee engagement and relevant aspects of competitive advantage. It aims to build a theoretical foundation to underpin the research and provides a conceptual model to assist in addressing the research question.

Chapter 3 describes the approach to data collection selected in response to the research question. It incorporates the research philosophy and principles, giving a detailed insight into the methods and strategy adopted. The approach adopted will be justified appropriately and ethical issues will also be considered.

Chapter 4 describes the analysis of data generated from the methods described in the previous chapter.

Chapter 5 discusses the data presented in Chapter 4 contextualised by the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, detailing how the research findings address the research questions and contribute to the current body of knowledge. It also reflects on the success of the research methodology and provides recommendations for further study.

1.7 Definitions

Manager: person in the organisation to whom one or more employees report.

Team member: person in the organisation who does not have any employees reporting to them, but works with other colleagues.

K.P.I's (Key Performance Indicators): business metrics reported at Management review.

1.8 Summary

This first chapter provides the background to the research, introducing the research question and aims. The justification for the research has been documented, along with a brief account of the chosen methodology and roadmap for subsequent chapters. The remainder of the dissertation will proceed with a detailed description of the research undertaken.

Chapter 2 – Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the themes of cultural change and employee engagement, as they relate to competitive advantage. It will provide a review of current thinking and identify instances where parallels between the two concepts have been drawn, thus establishing the theoretical foundation which will underpin the research. The learning from this review will be synthesised to develop a suitable conceptual model, which will be utilised to address the research question posed in Chapter 1.

2.2 Cultural change

There is a wealth of literature regarding organisational change, with many models recommending best practice and documenting potential pitfalls, however it still remains an area which poses significant challenge to organisations. Senge et al (1999) pessimistically state that most change initiatives fail, which is echoed in Armenakis and Harris' (2001) warning that implementing organisational change is one of the most important, but least understood skills of contemporary leaders.

The criticality of successful change was also documented by Kotter (1996) highlighting that global competition and fast moving business environments had made the 'if it aint broke don't fix it' attitude outdated and unsustainable. He also predicted that continued strengthening of powerful macro economic forces driving organisational change, would result in increasing pressure to drive improvements in quality, cost and delivery.

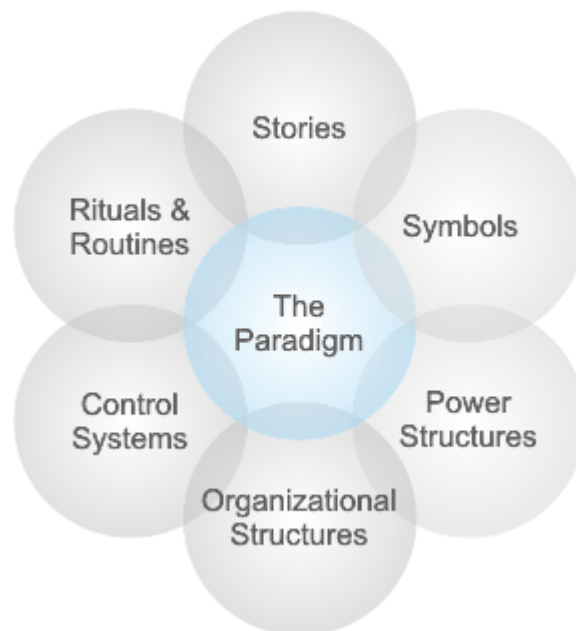
2.2.1 Strategic change and organisational culture

Senge et al (1999) infer that the majority change efforts aspire to enhance competitive advantage, stating that the common goal as organisations strive to shape their destiny is long term financial success. Johnson et al (2008) assert that change is a crucial component of

strategy, which is often difficult because of the heritage of resources and established organisational culture.

According to Schein's definition (1989): 'culture is a pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.' Johnson et al, (2008) cultural web provides a useful model for understanding an organisational culture.

Figure 2: The cultural web



Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2008, p. 197)

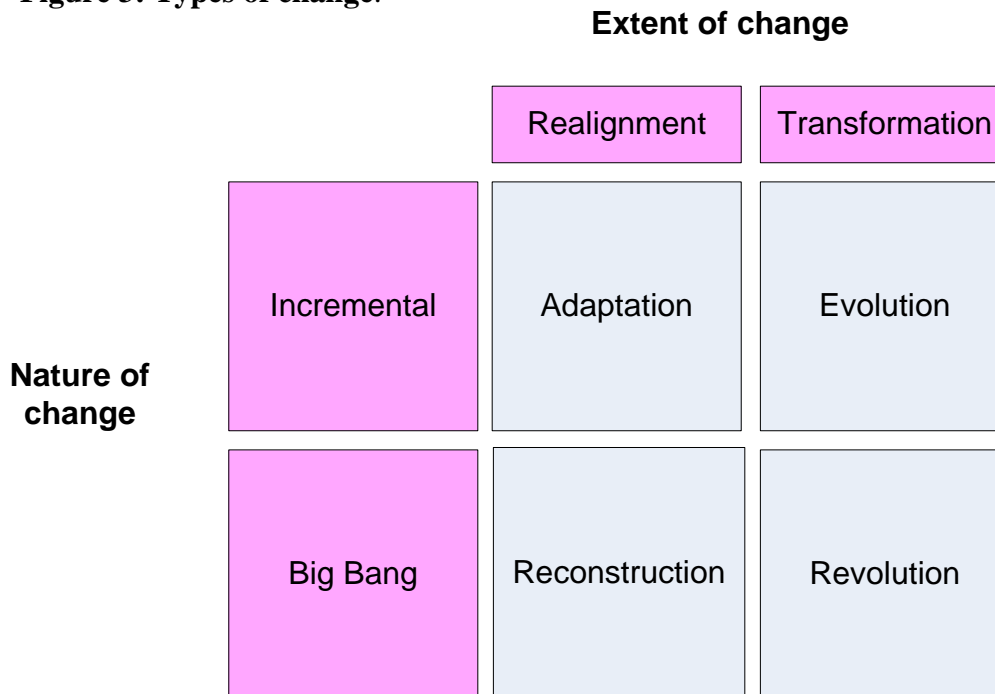
With regard to culture at Kingsland Grange, it is important to recognise that there has already been significant realignment over the few years, resulting from the integration which formed Life Technologies. Cartwright and Cooper (1995) postulate that merger-induced change requires often substantial, professional and personal re-adjustment that, if not managed well, can seriously undermine the change effort. Weick (1995) and Kyriakidou (2001) assert that merger-induced personal readjustment involves cognitive and emotional severance from the

pre-merger organisation and a re-alignment of self with a new “unknown” organisational reality. (Millward and Kyriakidou 2004).

2.2.2 Types of change

The literary accounts of change references different types of change: Planned change and emergent change; revolutionary and evolutionary change.

Figure 3: Types of change:



Johnson et al (2008, p.520) adapted from Balogun & Halley (1999)

Mintzberg et al (1998) suggest that the term ‘managed change’ is in fact an oxymoron, advising that change should not be ‘managed’ in the sense of forcing or making change happen, arguing that over managing of people may in itself be responsible for resistance to change. Instead recommending that the best way to manage change is to allow for it to happen, setting up conditions where people will follow their natural instincts. Planned change is triggered by a failure to create a continuously adaptive organisation, which is linked to effective organisational learning. (Hayes, 2007). Kotter and Heskett (1992) agree, stating that an adaptive culture is required for superior performance over long periods, whilst

Mintzberg et al. (1998) assert deliberate strategies focus on control and emergent strategies focus on learning.

2.2.3 Approaches to change

The process of change according to Lewin (1947) requires unfreezing of current behaviour to facilitate transitioning, then changing old processes for new ones, followed by refreezing of the new behaviour so it becomes part of the organization's culture. (Hayes, 2007). Almaraz (1994) argues that changes of magnitude and complexity are not adequately defined by traditional staged models of change (Beckhard and Harris, 1987, Lewin, 1975), asserting that Lewin's model does not allow for the dynamic, complex environment organisations now operate in, focussing more on transactional issues, rather than transformational change. Mack et al (1998) build on this viewpoint, emphasising the changing nature of organisational change, suggesting that employees now find themselves in a constant uncertain state, where the refreezing point is never actually reached. However, Hayes (2007) does assert that Lewin's point; that all too often change is short lived, remains valid. This is without doubt a sentiment the management team at Kingsland Grange would identify with. It is acknowledged that previous change initiatives have failed to become embedded, with focus on quick wins, rather than long term sustainability.

Johnson et al (2008) advocate using 'force field analysis' to provide a clear view of specific change issues. The identification of the forces for and against change and estimating their relative strengths can help to facilitate change. In the case of change at Kingsland Grange, the main driving force is establishing and maintaining competitive advantage, which will need to be leveraged to overcome many of the restraining forces identified, which may include aspects of employee engagement.

Beer and Nohria's (2000) work based on years of observation of organisational change, classified two approaches to change programmes, which they labelled Theory E and Theory O.

- Theory E is based on generating economic value or shareholder value. It tends to be associated with a top down approach, with emphasis on changes to structure, portfolio changes, downsizing and layoffs
- Theory O is based on development of organisational capability, with emphasis on culture change, learning, participation and experimentation.

Although these approaches seem to be radically different, Beer and Nohria suggest that integrating the two approaches may be the key to success.

2.2.4 Responses to change

Chreim (2004) confirmed that employee response to organisational change is a topic of interest. The literature relating to responses to change focuses primarily in two main areas, looking at willingness and resistance to change. Vakola and Nikoloau (2005) argue that employee attitudes towards change can impact their morale, productivity and turnover intentions. In addition, they report that evidence in change management literature supports the role of organisational commitment in employees' acceptance of change. Employees with higher levels of commitment; which can be linked to engagement, tend to be more amenable to change, providing there is a recognisable benefit.

Resistance is documented as a common response to organisational change, the reasons for resistance may include fear of the unknown, lack of appropriate information, threats to status, fear of failure or lack of perceived benefit and if a change is being imposed, people may resist in order to retain a perceived level of control over their circumstances. (Proctor and Doukasis, 2003).

The propensity for employees to resist change is particularly concerning in light of Deloitte and Touche's 1996 research, which cites resistance as the number one reason for change initiative failure (Vakola and Nikoloau, 2005). Interestingly; some commentators observe that organisational change can be a very stressful experience for individuals (Vakola and Nikoloau, 2005, Elrod and Tippet, 2002). Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) confirm that rapid

change can have psychological consequences, based on Toffler's (1970) concept of future shock, which is defined as the stress and disorientation suffered when people are subjected to excessive change.

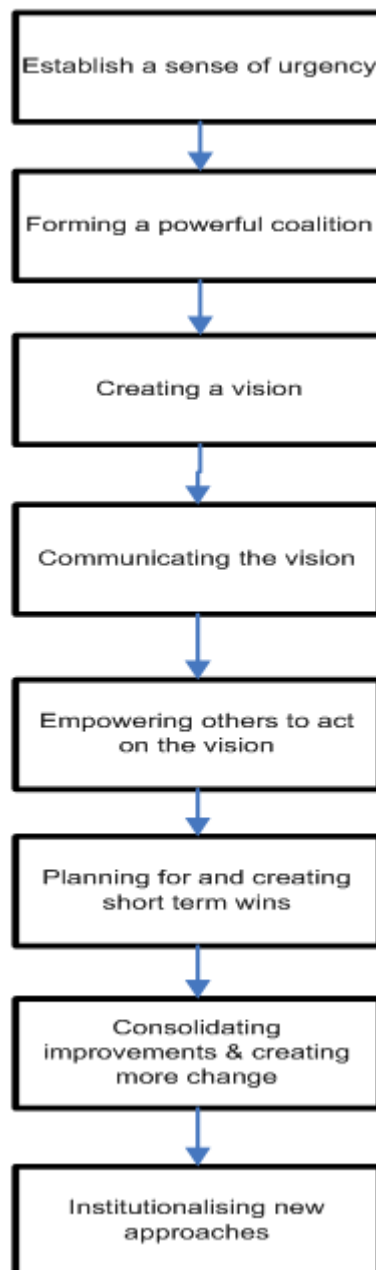
Harris and Ogbonna's (2000) work examining the impact of 'market orientated' culture change initiatives, which theoretically provides scope to improve efficiency and effectiveness by aligning with customer requirements, highlighted further potential issues. They refer to a theme of culture control in organisational culture literature, resulting in a phenomenon labelled 'emotional labour' where employees' reaction to change is dominated by perceived management expectation. Therefore employees' responses maybe staged rather than genuine, which the authors argue could be a potential factor which contributes to stress,

The potential negative connotations of organisational change are also themes in the work of Kubler Ross (1969) whose coping cycle draws parallels with traumatic personal loss, indicating that people typically experience first denial, followed by anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. Evidence suggests that recognising where people are in the response cycle, may prove useful in diagnosing the appropriate support strategy, although it is important note that individuals will experience the cycle in different ways. (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004)

Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) suggest that fear and anxiety are primarily responsible for resistance, recommending facilitation and support as a strategy to help enable change. (Hayes, 2007) Whilst Proctor and Doukasis (2003) advocate involving people early in the process, ensuring consultation, encouraging ownership of new ideas and stress the importance of understanding the organisation's culture for achieving sustainable change. The importance of strong working relationships to facilitate communication and enable management of conflict is highlighted by Vakola and Nikoloau (2005), who also warn against ignoring the additional workload that any change effort generates. They assert that this will potentially increase the risk of negative attitudes developing, heightening resistance.

Kotter (1995) developed an arguably seminal process model for change management, mapping eight stages for success, based on the study of both success and failure in change efforts. The model illustrated in Figure 4 advocates a top down approach, which champions the concept of sharing a future state vision, whilst and empowering people to act on that vision. Kotter and Heskett (1992) observe that a major factor in success or failure of change relates to competent leadership, with Kotter (1996) warning that unsuccessful change efforts can result in employees developing pessimistic and angry conclusions.

Figure 4: Kotter's model of change:



Kotter (1996, p.21)

2.3 Employee engagement

Employee engagement is a measure of interest because of its potential to establish and maintain competitive advantage. De Mello e Souza Wildermuth. and Pauken (2008) state that evidence to date seems to support considerable benefits for organisations, citing Harter et al's 2002 research, which identified significant positive relationships with customer satisfaction, productivity, profit, turnover and safety.

Figure 5: Model of the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement:



Saks (2006)

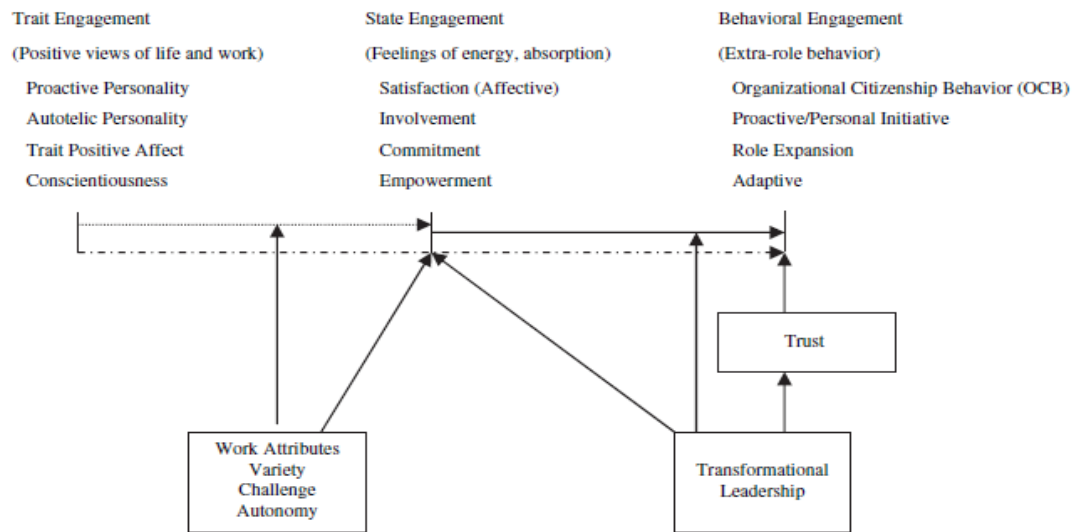
Macey and Schneider (2008) suggest that engagement is popular with organisational management, because of claims it drives bottom line results, through productivity improvements, increased sales, customer satisfaction and employee retention.

Although the key words 'employee engagement' yield over two million hits on the world wide web, Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) report that there was a large disparity between the widespread corporate interest in employee engagement and the sparse evidence of academic research and writing. This is challenged by Medlin and Green (2009) who assert that employee engagement has been well documented in the last decade, since the Gallup organisation developed the Q12: a survey instrument to measure employee engagement. With regard to the academic standpoint on engagement, May et al (2004) argue that irrespective of their definition of engagement, academics tend to agree that engagement is in fact 'experienced' by individuals, so though it is impacted by management strategies, it is not, in itself a strategy.

Numerous definitions of employee engagement can be derived from literature and as it is a relatively new concept, some ambiguity exists. According to Kahn (1990) employees can be emotionally, cognitively or physically engaged. Macey and Schneider (2008) summarise the commentary in literature, by labelling engagement a 'multi dimensional construct' which encompasses a variety of ideas that engagement can be viewed as behavioural, state or that it can be related to trait differences. With regard to trait engagement, Vosburgh (2008) presents the argument that recruitment decisions can potentially be enhanced by selecting individuals predisposed to be engaged.

Macey and Schneider (2008) present a framework for understanding the elements of employee engagement, illustrating that conditions of the workplace have both a direct and indirect impact on engagement. They acknowledge that creating optimal conditions for behavioural and state engagement poses a significant challenge, but argue that if success is achieved, this presents a significant opportunity for competitive advantage, which is more difficult to replicate than straight forward differentiators, like product and prices.

Figure 6: Framework for understanding the elements of employee engagement:



Macey and Schneider (2008)

Work engagement is defined by Schaufeli et al (2002) as a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption, . Therefore engaged employees are anticipated to be highly energetic (vigour), take pride in and are enthusiastic towards their work (dedication) and will completely focus on the task in hand (absorbed) ready to give their ‘all’ to their job and go the ‘extra mile’ to achieve success. (De Mello e Souza Wildermuth and Pauken, 2008). Whilst Kahn (1990) described engagement at work as ‘harnessing organisational members’ to their work roles. Schaufeli et al (2007) state that engaged employees experience a ‘sense of energetic and effective connection with their work activities’ and perceive that they are able to deal well with the demands of their job.

According to Saks (2006) burnout research defines engagement as the positive antithesis of burnout. Maslach et al (2001) state that engagement is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy, as opposed to the three burnout dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy. Engagement has links to Csikzentmihalyi’s (1975) notion of flow, defined as the ‘holistic sensation’ people experience when they act with total involvement. (Woodruffe, 2006).

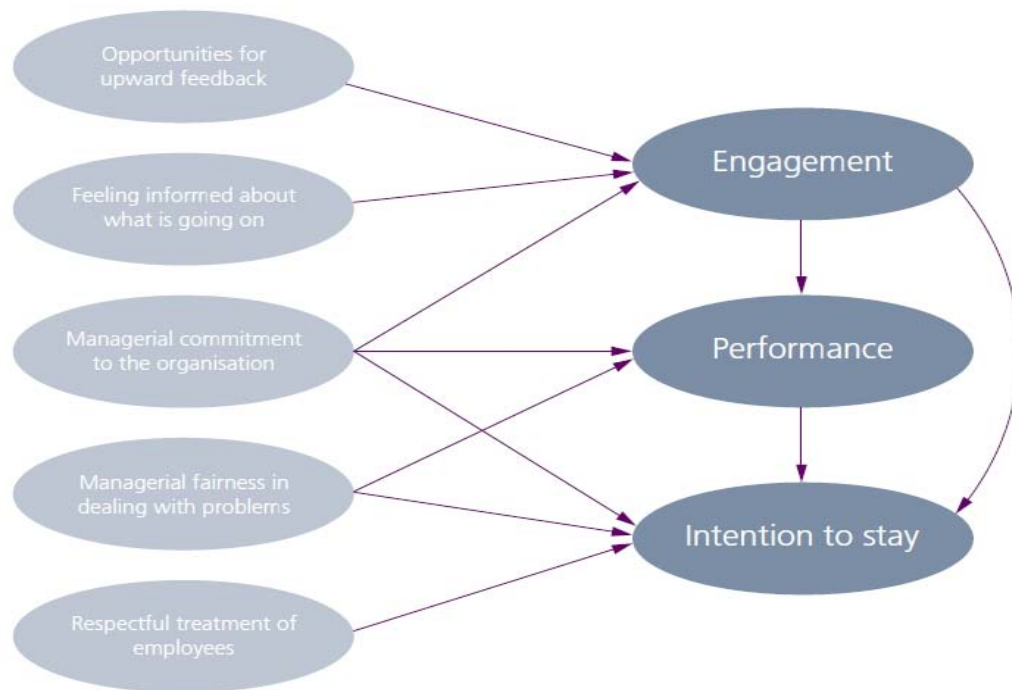
Schaufeli et al (2007) elaborate that work engagement is characterised by working excess time, job resources, positive work outcomes, good quality of social relationships and health. Marcum (2000) presented a suggested formula for engagement: $E = L(I + C_p + C_h) \times Inv (A + C_o + C_m) = IK/Ef = E$. Where engagement = Learning (interest + competence + challenge) x Involvement (activity + communication + commitment) producing increased knowledge and effectiveness.

Saks' (2006) social exchange theory (SET) argues that relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal and mutual commitments as long the parties abide by certain rules of exchange, in a two way relationship between employer and employee. This provides a theoretical foundation to explain why some employees choose to become more or less engaged in their work and organisation.

Engagement is distinguished from traditional motivational theories by commentators such as Marcum (2000) in that, even with the more 'humanistic' element of self actualisation provided by Maslow's hierarchy of need, motivation seeks to stimulate action and is founded on a 'paternalistic assumption', that a person of perceived seniority is required to generate the motivating force to instigate that action, whilst also relying very heavily on rewards to achieve objectives. Whereas people choose to be engaged, engaging activities are interesting and enjoyable and notably engagement cannot be static; it is a dynamic process. This is particularly interesting in the context of Life Technologies, in that the very action of making employee engagement a 'strategic imperative' could be perceived as making that 'paternalistic assumption'.

Research carried out by the UK's Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in December, 2006 generated a report into Working Life: Employee Attitudes and Engagement, results of which were used to develop the model shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Engagement, Performance and Retention:



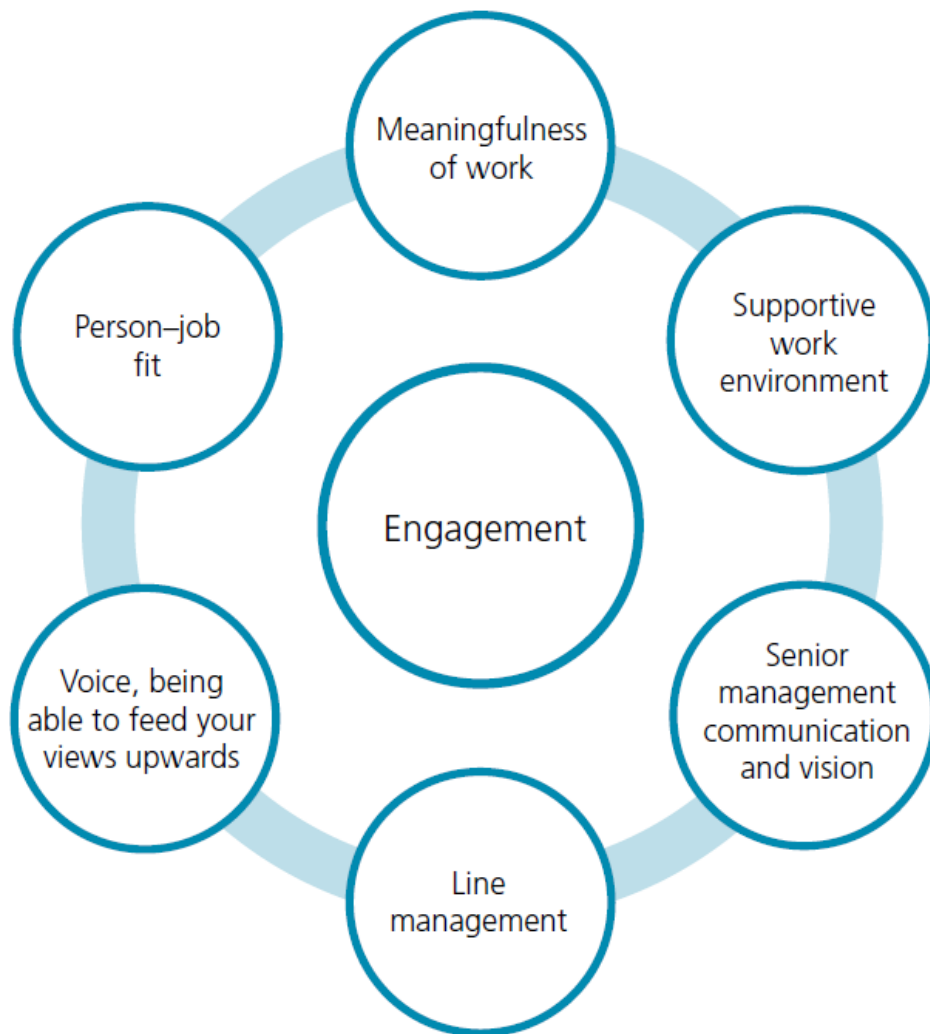
CIPD (2006)

The model demonstrates the importance of managerial actions, which were shown to be most significantly related to engagement levels. Additionally, this research indicated that other aspects of employment relate to engagement; including job satisfaction, flexibility, age and job content. The CIPD report asserts that engaged employees perform better than others; enhancing quality and innovation, demonstrate higher levels of organisational advocacy and are less likely to take sick leave or quit. The benefits of engagement are reported to impact on both the employer and employee, as individuals with the highest levels of engagement, also appear to have higher levels of personal well-being. The UK Government's MacLeod review (Macleod and Clarke, 2009) corroborates the CIPD's findings, agreeing that engagement plays a critical role in organisational success and individual well being.

Further CIPD research titled 'Creating an engaged workforce' was published in 2010. The findings indicated strong links between job type and levels of engagement. Specifically, the data generated in the UK showed that managers, or people in professional roles, are significantly more engaged than non managers. Older employees who, the report postulates

are more likely to have interesting job content , tend to be more engaged than those under 25, whilst employees who work full time are more likely to be engaged than their part time counterparts. A further finding, which the report acknowledges cannot be attributed to job content, revealed that women are significantly more engaged in their work than men. The research also offered a model to demonstrate the drivers for engagement shown in Figure 8 and cited meaningfulness and employee voice as the most important of the drivers identified.

Figure 8: Employee engagement model:



CIPD (2010)

Piersol (2007) cites Oakley's 2004 study, linking Organisational characteristics to employee attitudes and behaviours. Stating that organisational communication is imperative to promoting engagement, stressing that this communication flow has to go up, as well as down, allowing flow of information from front line employees to senior management, to ensure employees feel they are being listened to. This draws parallels with Beer's (2001) theory that poor quality of upward communication is one of the 'silent killers' that block change and learning. (Hayes, 2007).

Despite the documented benefits of employee engagement, the reality remains elusive. Fairhurst (2008) laments the difficulties UK organisations experience in achieving employee engagement, citing the UK's CIPD December, 2006 report on Working Life: Employee Attitudes and Engagement which found that only 35 per cent of the 2000 employees interviewed were 'actively engaged' in their work and Gallup research estimating the cost of disengagement to the UK Economy in 2001, as over £37 billion. Kruger and Killham (2006) highlight the distinction between employees who are 'not engaged' and those who are actively 'disengaged' in that the latter may be disgruntled enough to undermine the work of their own team members. (De Mello e Souza Wildermuth. and Pauken, 2008).

2.4 Competitive advantage:

Thompson and Richardson (1996) assert that organisations must add value for their customers, regardless of whether they seek to make profit or not. Organisations which achieve high levels of differentiation, maintain lower costs and achieve operating efficiencies will achieve competitive advantage and earn profits higher than the industrial average.

The theme of competitive advantage is prevalent in much of the literature on strategy. Sherman et al (2007) assert that the development of strategy relies fundamentally on SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, which is the iterative process assessing and aligning a company's competencies and resource in line with the external environment, to create best fit. Therefore supporting the view that strategy should be dynamic and presenting the challenge, that not only must companies set achievable

strategies, they must also be proactive and responsive to retain an established competitive advantage. Business Strategy as defined by Porter (1980) is the division between companies attempting to achieve differentiation from the competition through distinctive levels of service, flexibility of product range or quality, resulting in cost leadership (Paauwe and Boselie, 2003).

The link between competitive advantage and people in the organisation is documented in the literature relating to HRM (Human Resource Management). Many assert that the link between strategy and HRM is essential, both in theory and practice, to achieve effective utilisation of the organisation's workforce and improve performance (Bin Othman, 1996), with the effective deployment of HRM resulting in a powerful basis for competitive advantage (Barney 1995). The resource-based view promotes the ideology that people make the difference, promoting human capital managed in a strategic way as the key to competitive advantage (Barney & Wright, 1998).

In HRM theory two distinct approaches have emerged, which are labelled the 'hard' and 'soft' models of HRM. The 'hard' model focuses on HRM as a strategically driven process, where people are treated as any other business resource. 'Soft' HRM, which is more widely documented, equates to developing and maintaining a strong culture within an organisation, which can be linked to the concept of employee engagement.

Boxall (2003) suggests a link between market characteristics, competitive dynamics and HRM strategy. The hard approach tends to be symptomatic of cost based, low margin and plentiful labour markets, driving out the possibility for HRM advantage. Whereas, the 'soft' approach, tends to be favoured in knowledge based organisations, which recognise people as a source of competitive advantage. Garavan et al (1995) hypothesise that a growth in HRM strategic focus comes from the notion of competitive advantage promoted by Porter (1980) accompanied by a desire to align employees' values with organisational strategy.

The 'soft' approach to HRM is explored in the work of Beer *et al* (1985) utilising the Harvard model of HRM. (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2006). It shows human resource management policies to be influenced by two significant considerations:

Situational factors: such as laws and societal values, labour market conditions, unions, work-force characteristics, business strategies, management philosophy and task technology, which shape the operating environment.

Stakeholder interests: including those of shareholders, management employees, unions, community, and government.

The model also illustrates that HRM policies have both HRM outcomes and long-term consequences, reflecting an extremely positive view of HRM benefiting all stakeholders and generating positive outcomes. However, opposing views exist, Purcell (1999) theorises that HRM also has the potential to create competitive disadvantage, if it is not integrated with strategy and the strategic change process, which relates back to the point that strategy is dynamic and has to be responsive to change.

Thus organisational change is linked to competitive advantage; with commentators such as Jamali *et al* (2006) warning of the risk of failure, if organisations fail to adapt to the relentless pace of change imposed by the environment in which they operate. This supports Beer and Nohria's (2000) view that effective change management has potential to enhance performance, promising 'huge payoffs' in return for usable knowledge about the process of change. Further substantiation is provided by Takaki's (2005) account of a case study carried out at Precor, which illustrated that creation of a 'dynamic culture suitable for a growing organisation' can enhance competitive advantage, generating impressive bottom line results, including a 50% revenue increase and profitability improvements in excess of 200%.

2.5 Summary

It is apparent that common themes run through the literature. Senge et al (1999) assert that one of the drivers for organisational change is to unleash employees' natural talents and enthusiasm. Whilst Vakola and Nikoloau (2005) state that positive attitudes to change are vital to the success of change initiatives and achieving organisational goals. This links to the pursuit of competitive advantage, which in a landscape of increasingly competitive markets and demanding customers, requires greater emphasis on flexible, responsive organisations (Snape et al, 1995).

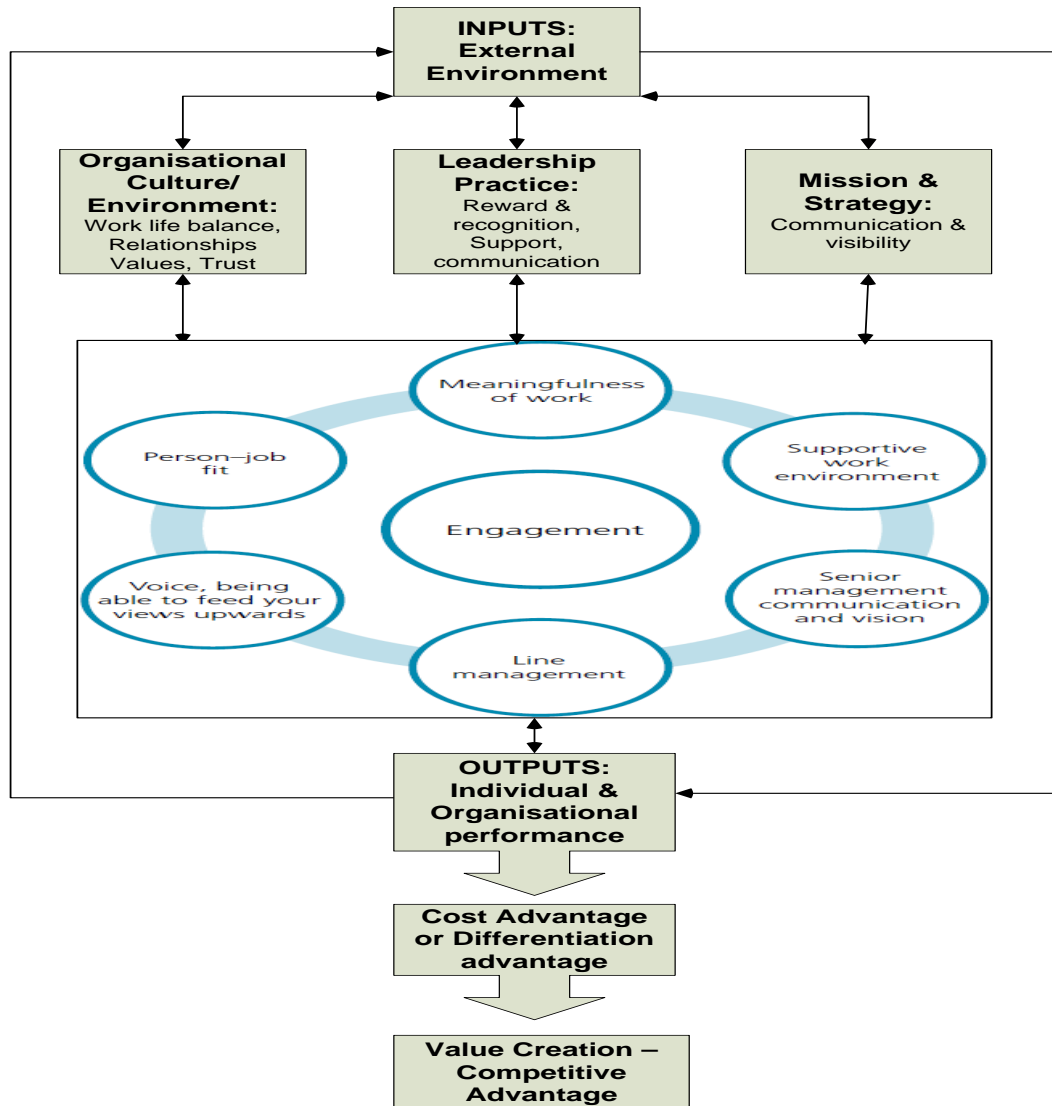
Senge et al (1999) examined the critical elements of an organisational change campaign at Shell Oil, which refers specifically to engagement. The account describes a fundamental shift in the relationship between employees and organisations. Asserting that traditional 'job security' has been replaced, by the recognition that security lies now in performance, a situation characterised by a higher degree of uncertainty and accountability. The organisation is responsible for providing an environment which is conducive to commitment and helping employees build their skills to enable success.

In summary, the literature search has provided evidence that successful cultural change and improved employee engagement have potential to enhance competitive advantage. Although, it remains to be seen if this is can borne out in reality, particularly in light of the well documented challenges faced by any cultural change effort and the warnings that poorly executed change initiatives may negatively impact engagement, causing increased risk of stress and burnout.

2.6 Proposed conceptual model

The common themes identified in the literature reviewed were used to develop the conceptual model shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Causal model illustrating the interaction between factors relating to transformational change, employee engagement and competitive advantage.



Adapted from Burke, W.W and Litwin G.H (1992) (Hayes, 2007, p122), De Mello e Souza Wildermuth. and Pauken, (2008), Macey and Schneider (2008), CIPD (2010), Porter (1985).

The model is developed from the perspective of open system theory, which Hayes (2007) explains is characterised by:

- 1) An organisation embedded in a larger system – recognising the impact of the external environment providing resource, feedback and information
- 2) Ability to avoid entropy, through a dynamic relationship with the environment.
- 3) Regulation by feedback, the system relies on feedback about the outputs to regulate the inputs and transformation process.
- 4) Equifinality, the same outcomes will be achieved by configuring the system in different ways.
- 5) Cyclical functioning, in that events tend to occur in repetitive cycles of inputs, throughput and outputs.
- 6) Equilibrium/steady state seeking.
- 7) Defined boundaries are established.

The intention is to view the organisation as a system of inter- related components that transact with a larger environment. The model draws on Burke-Litwin's (1992) causal model of organisational performance and change (Hayes, 2007), feedback loops go in both directions indicating that the organisation's performance impacts the external environment and vice versa. The feedback mechanism also aims to reflect Vakola and Nikoloau's (2005) assertion that organisational commitment, which is facet of engagement, impacts employees' acceptance of change.

As the research is focussed on culture change, so attention is focussed on the transformational elements of Mission and Strategy, Leadership Practices and Organisational Culture. The work of De Mello e Souza Wildermuth. and Pauken, (2008) and Macey and Schneider (2008) is used to supplement each of these elements, with the specific factors relating to engagement, whilst job characteristics, labelled with the CIPD (2010) nomenclature of person-job fit and meaningfulness of work are introduced as an additional driver for engagement.

The overlay of the CIPD (2010) model for employee engagement serves to provide an interface between theoretical and practitioner knowledge, offering key drivers for enhancing employee engagement from recent research carried out in the UK.

Finally the link is made to competitive advantage, recognising that to create value the organisation must establish and maintain competitive advantage, through cost or differentiation advantage (Porter, 1985). The model is established from a resourced based standpoint; based on the hypothesis that Kingland Grange has a potential resource of engaged employees, who could be used to generate outcomes which will enhance competitive advantage.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

‘All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts,’

Shakespeare, As You Like It Act 2, scene 7, 139–143.

3.1 Introduction.

This chapter describes the approach to data collection selected in response to the research question. It will incorporate the research philosophy and principles, giving a detailed insight into the methods and strategy adopted. The approach adopted will be justified appropriately and in conclusion ethical issues will also be considered.

3.2 Philosophy

The research was approached from an interpretivist or phenomenological stance, which Saunders et al (2007) describe as an epistemology that advocates the necessity for researchers to understand the difference between humans in our roles as social actors.

The author's background as a scientist, compounded by lengthy experience in a data driven work environment, initially created something of a conflict regarding the philosophical approach for the research, resulting from an ingrained tendency towards a positivistic stance. Fisher (2007) asserts that positivism intends to produce general laws that can be used to predict certain behaviour, maintaining that an accurate and value free knowledge of things is possible.

However in the sphere of human interaction it could be suggested that no exchange is value free and on reflection, the author would agree with Fisher's (2007) assertion that research into the social and institutional world does not easily lend itself to a positivistic approach. Moreover, the author is genuinely fascinated by the concept of peoples' roles within an organisation as 'social actors' in the realisation that people's sense of reality both influences,

and is influenced by that of others. (Saunders et al 2007). Therefore, as the focus of the research was very much an examination of social construct; in terms of cultural change and its impact on employee engagement. The inherent complexity of this relationship convinced the author that focussing on an interpretive approach was the most appropriate epistemology to adopt.

Building on the concept that the research was an examination of social construct, the author adopted a subjectivist ontological viewpoint. Recognising that social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors, in a continual process, where the social phenomena are revised through the ongoing process of social interaction. (Saunders et al 2007). The social actors involved will inevitably perceive situations differently and their consequent actions will vary depending on their sense of reality. Acknowledging that to gain an understanding of these actions from interpretivist standpoint, the research needed to explore the subjective meanings motivating action.

3.3 Axiology

The premise that social research cannot be value free, raises the question of axiology, which examines how the researcher's own values influence the research process, which Saunders et al (2007) argue is of great importance in terms of establishing credibility. As the research was carried out in the author's own organisation, it was critical that appropriate consideration be given to ensuring sensitivity to people and context, including the awareness of people's different reactions to any proposed change.

The interpretivist stance adopted was intended to enable an empathetic approach, with the primary goal of establishing a greater understanding of the research subject, rather than offering recommendations for action. The author felt that this approach would enable greater subjectivity and overcome some of the potential conflict, which would stem from the vested interest in improving aspects of employee engagement and facilitating successful change of a Senior Manager in the organisation. That said, Fisher (2007) asserts that understanding a situation should help us to use our judgement to arrive at better, if not necessarily the best,

choice of action, a sentiment which the author supports, in the belief that the understanding gained from the research can be used to support her decision making in future.

3.4 Research approach

As a starting point, the literature review provided a basis to contextualise the research and gain understanding, which included a review of established contextual models. Rowley (2004) emphasises the importance of this effort, asserting that research should make a contribution to the existing body of knowledge, so making it critical that the researcher is acquainted with that knowledge base. The approach to the research was primarily inductive, which Saunders et al (2007) state involves gaining an understanding of the meaning humans attach to events and Mintzberg (2004) asserts is about coming up with ideas, concepts or theories from investigation, indicating that probing is required, to generate rich descriptions which will stimulate the creative mind.

However, some aspects of deduction may be employed, which Mintzberg (2004) describes as testing of findings to assess how explanatory they are particularly looking at the validity of selected theoretical frameworks in practice.

3.5 Research strategy

The author elected to carry out the research as a case study, Yin (1981) described a case study as the examination of ‘a contemporary phenomenon in its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used’ (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2006). In terms of this research, the contemporary phenomenon is the impact of cultural change initiatives on employee engagement and competitive advantage, in the real life context of Kingsland Grange.

The case study approach was selected aspiring to gain a rich understanding of the context promised by Morris and Wood (1991), (Saunders et al 2007). The author’s decision to focus the research at Kingsland Grange, as a single case, was based on the time constraints of the

research project and more critically, the fact that cultural change was a prevalent theme for the selected organisation. Therefore the case study had genuine potential to generate interesting research outcomes.

3.6 Research methods

Consideration was given to the fact that the author's position in the organisation had the potential to increase the risk of bias, in that people could be unwilling to participate or alter their responses to try to win favour. Reasonable attempts were made to mitigate this effect, by use of appropriate data collection methods and triangulation. Therefore the author elected to use a multi method approach including semi structured interviews, observation and where appropriate documentary research. The intention was to cross reference data generated from each source, as a sanity check to strengthen the validity of conclusions drawn.

3.6.1 Semi structured interviews

The interviews were carried out with twelve staff members at Kingsland Grange, which equates to just over ten per cent of the total population. Following a review of the potential approaches available for semi structured interviews, the researcher decided to utilise the critical incident approach, which Fisher (2007) states has a 'long pedigree in social science research.' The respondents were asked to think of specific examples of cultural change at Kingsland change, reflecting on the impact of successful and failed culture change initiatives on employees and business results. This approach is pursuant to the advice of Saunders et al (2007) that interview questions should be grounded in real life experiences, rather than abstract concepts.

The development of the research instrument was based on the literature review and resulting conceptual model. Initially, the intention was to start the interviews with questions relating the respondent's definitions of the main research themes of employee engagement, cultural change and competitive advantage. However, a brief pilot of this format illustrated that this approach was not appropriate, as feedback indicated that this made the interviews feel too

much like a 'test' and might cause respondents to feel inhibited. (See Appendix 2, for Pilot Questionnaire feedback details).

However it was apparent from the pilot, that participants might not have consistent understanding of the main research themes, which gave rise to concern that interview questions could be misinterpreted, skewing responses. In order to mitigate this risk, the researcher decided to provide participants with brief definitions of the terms which caused confusion in the pilot; employee engagement and competitive advantage, to ensure a shared understanding. The definitions used were taken from the literature review and transcribed on to the interview question sheet, the intended protocol was for the researcher to read out the definitions prior to starting the interviews and check to ensure understanding. The inclusion of research theme definitions was not piloted, as the planned approach was reviewed with several participants of the original pilot and the feedback was reassuringly favourable, with no concerns raised.

The pilot interview feedback was supportive of the critical incident approach adopted, indicating that it was easier to answer the questions in relation to specific examples. Also, one participant suggested that it might be a useful tool to remove potential bias from the study relating the author's position in the organisation. In that, discussion of historical examples may be perceived as low risk and therefore might elicit more honest and open responses.

The pilot, which was carried out with four participants in January 2010, also highlighted that the wording of questions was critical to ensuring responses contained sufficient detail. Initially, some of the questions were worded so that a yes/no answer would be an appropriate response. Therefore during two of the pilot sessions, the researcher had to request participants elaborate, when a yes/no answer was offered. This was a useful observation and gave the opportunity to refine those closed questions, prior to starting the interviews.

Finally, with regard to optimising the interview questions the researcher reviewed the pilot interview outcomes, with respect to the literature review and conceptual framework.

Generally, it appeared that there was some good correlation, although it was very apparent that the pilot interviews did not really provide any insight into resistance to change. Given that this theme is so prevalent in the literary accounts of cultural change, the researcher deemed it appropriate to add additional questions to ensure this was addressed.

Therefore it was decided to proceed with the following questions:

In your opinion, what are the main factors influencing employee engagement at Kingsland Grange?

In your opinion, what impact does employee engagement at Kingsland Grange have on business results/competitive advantage?

Can you think of an example where cultural change was carried out successfully at Kingsland Grange:

- *Why do you feel the change effort was successful?*
- *How was resistance to the change dealt with?*
- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*
- *What was the impact on business results?*

Can you think of an example where cultural change was unsuccessful at Kingsland Grange:

- *Why do you feel the change effort was failed?*
- *How was resistance to the change dealt with?*
- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*
- *What was the impact on business results?*

The full questionnaire, plus the relevant definitions used, is shown in Appendix 3.

The interview participants were selected in early February 2010 and appropriate efforts were made to ensure there was an even balance of gender and employee grades. In addition to the questions outlined previously, the following criteria were also recorded to help contextualise the data generated:

- Gender
- Job grade
- Job role - manager or team member status
- Time with the organisation
- Age group

Initial requests for participation were made verbally, then providing the individuals agreed, this was followed up with an e-mailed appointment request. (See Appendix 5, for an example). Prior to setting up the meetings, approval to proceed was requested and granted by the Site Director, which was followed up with an approval request to each participant's line manager.

The interviews were carried out between 1st March 2010 and 16th April 2010. The appointment invitation detailed the time and location of the interview, ensuring the slot was scheduled into participants' calendars. All of the meetings were planned in advance, with a dedicated meeting room booked to ensure privacy. (See Appendix 6, for an interview timetable). The invitation also included the Participant information and consent form, as an attachment for review.

The Participant information and consent form (See Appendix 4) was based on an example offered by Fisher (2007) to ensure informed consent was established in all cases. The form provided the following details:

- Invitation details
- Purpose of the study
- Reasons why participants were selected
- Reassurance that participation is voluntary.
- Details the format of the interviews
- Confidentiality and data management details
- Authorisation via participant & researcher signature, prior to starting the interview.

The form was reviewed at the start of each interview session, to ensure participants were in possession of all the relevant facts and felt comfortable to proceed.

All the individuals invited to take part in the study agreed to participate and no concerns were raised prior to the scheduled meetings. The interviews took place in accordance with the defined schedule, with only one exception. In this instance, a change in work priorities meant that the participant concerned was not available to take part in the interview. Therefore the meeting was rescheduled at more convenient time.

Following the interviews, notes were transcribed in full within 24 hours, aiming to ensure accuracy. Personal details were protected using a simple system of coding, with each participant's responses referenced to a letter A to L, assigned in alphabetical order, based on

the order that the interviews took place. Only one of the participants chose to specifically mention other personnel in the organisation by name in their responses to the interview questions. Therefore, in the interests of preserving anonymity, prior to closing the interview, the researcher suggested that these names should be omitted from the interview transcript to be replaced by a code. The participant was in full agreement with this approach, so the letter X was used to denote any other employees cited in the interview responses.

The interviews generated 'presentational data' which Marchington and Wilkinson, (2006) state is based on 'symbolic projections and appearances', as opposed to 'operational data' which relates to behaviour actually observed by the researcher. In recognition of the fact, that primary data collected from the interviews is based on participants' opinions, it was critical to ensure the findings were appropriately evaluated, using multiple triangulation to help strengthen the reliability of interpretation and conclusions subsequently drawn.

Following transcription of the data collected, the researcher used a system of colour coding to establish common themes and highlight any parallels that could be drawn with the literature review and the conceptual framework. This formed the basis for the data analysis approach, ensuring the empirical research findings were evaluated in conjunction with the established knowledge base and the researcher's documentary and observational data, to test the validity of the conceptual framework and synthesise informed conclusions.

3.6.2 Documentary research

Saunders et al (2007) describe the use of secondary data as re-analyzing data which is readily available, as it has been collected for some other purpose, which can provide a useful source to answer, at least in part, the research question.

The selection of the secondary data was based on the literature review and resulting conceptual model. The most obvious resource available is the data available for the organisation's bi annual "All Employee Survey", which is administered by an external group and is carried out online, ensuring employee anonymity. The completion rates for the survey tend to be high, so consequently the data should provide very good coverage of the employee population at Kingsland Grange. The survey focuses strongly on employee engagement, so results can be readily linked to the research question. The survey data from April 2009 and October 2009 will be included in the study. The researcher had hoped to include results for the first 2010 survey, to provide an accurate picture of the current state, but unfortunately the survey start date was delayed until May 2010, so the research timeline precluded its inclusion.

In addition to the data generated from the survey, the opportunity also existed to evaluate the established definition of employee engagement, which the survey aims to measure. This will be examined in light of the literature review as an assessment of reliability.

Other sources of secondary data were also explored relating to some of the antecedents of employee engagement, referenced in the literature review; specifically data relating to employee retention, (Saks, 2006) and sick leave (CIPD, 2006). This data was reviewed from November 2008 to April 2010.

3.6.3 Observational research

Saunders et al (2007) advocate the use of observation, stating that it can add 'richness' to the research data compiled. As the research was carried out in the author's own organisation, the approach was inevitably participant observation, which Marchington and Wilkinson, (2006) define as requiring the researcher to involve themselves in the lives of those being studied.

Saunders et al (2007) cite Delbridge and Kirkpatrick's (1994) assertion that adequate explanation of the behaviour of social actors, is dependant on endeavoring to understand their meanings. However, Marchington and Wilkinson, (2006) advise that a balance is required between involvement and distance, to ensure the researcher remains objective and avoids 'going native'.

The research question asks whether cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange have enhanced employee engagement and competitive advantage, which the researcher recognised would be a gradual process, which would potentially benefit from ongoing observation over a period of time.

Therefore the researcher determined that an approach utilising primary observations, with the researcher recording a diary or timeline of events, over a fixed period would be useful. The detail would include noting what had happened and if appropriate, comments made at the time.

The account would aim to include the following themes, referenced from the proposed conceptual model:

- Changes to the external environment
- Changes to organisational culture or environment
- Change to leadership practices
- Changes to mission or strategy

The response and outcomes of these events were documented, with data collection and some level of analysis happening simultaneously. The researcher was mindful of Saunders et al's (2007) advice about timely write up to avoid loss of valuable data. This data was compiled for the period between January and April 2010.

3.6.4 Rejected methods

Initially the author had planned to utilise focus groups as a key research method. The intention was to encourage the groups to engage in a free flowing, but focussed, discussion relating to the research question (Fisher, 2007). However, following a disappointing pilot, the researcher made the decision to exclude this method, in favour of semi structured interviews.

The main issue encountered with the focus group approach was a lack of free flowing discussion. The feedback solicited following the pilot sessions, revealed that people generally felt somewhat inhibited, particularly with regard to discussing aspects of employee engagement in a group situation, even if that group consisted only of their peers.

The reticence observed may also be related to the researcher's position of seniority in the organisation, although not surprisingly this did not get mentioned in the feedback

3.6.5 Limitations of methods

Marchington and Wilkinson (2006) warn that case study research can lead to bias, with the inherent limitations of any single method or the impact of the researcher on the situation. The researcher took reasonable steps to mitigate this risk, using a multi method approach and secondary data sources, not influenced by potential researcher bias.

Mintzberg (2004) states that good research is deeply ground in the phenomenon it seeks to describe, warning that questionnaires can distance the researcher from the subject, creating confusion as the data generated is too superficial to enable insight. This warning will be considered when analysing data from the employee survey.

Finally due to the time constraints of the study, there was insufficient time available to optimise the methods fully. The limited use of pilot studies provided some insight, but was by no means comprehensive. The potential to use ‘grounded theory’ which Saunders et al’s (2007) describe as an iterative process of theory development and theory testing, was considered, but could not be accommodated due to the time constraints of the assignment.

3.6.6 Triangulation and validity

Marchington and Wilkinson (2006) cite Denzin’s work (1970) which stressed the need to employ multiple methods in the analysis of the same empirical events, as no single method can ever completely capture all the relevant features of that reality.

The approaches to triangulation can be classified as follows.

- Data triangulation: using varied data sources to gain a fuller picture of an event.
- Investigator triangulation: removing the researcher as a source of bias, which gives greater reliability of data
- Theoretical triangulation: approaching the study from multiple perspectives and hypotheses, allowing for the widest possible use of theoretical findings.
- Methodological triangulation: use of a combination of methods, to enhance reliability of data.

The author has endeavoured to bring elements of each in this research, to ensure effective data gathering and interpretation, leading to reliable conclusions. The multi method approach employed ensured that the elements of data and methodological triangulation were considered. The use of secondary data sources, such as the employee survey results and statistics relating to retention and staff absence, was intended to enable the primary data collected to be compared and contextualised. Also the mix of ‘presentational’ and ‘operational’ data collected provides additional opportunities to enhance reliability.

The use of secondary data sources also introduced an element of investigator triangulation, particularly in relation to the employee survey results, as this data is collected electronically by an independent third party. The decision to use this data, as opposed to a questionnaire dedicated for this research, was primarily to ensure that potential investigator bias was removed, particularly in light of the researcher's senior position within the organisation.

With regard to theoretical triangulation, this is grounded in the thorough literature review completed prior to starting the research.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Brewerton and Millward (2001) advise that 'the researcher must retain a high degree of integrity in conducting research within a "live" setting'.

The participating organisation gave permission for the author to proceed with the research and critically the expectation was set, that the research was conducted from an interpretivist standpoint, so a specific list of recommendations for improvement was not expected to be delivered.

In addition to the initial request for permission, prior to starting the research, the time commitment required for the interview process was explained to the Site Director and the participants' line managers to ensure understanding and gain approval. This was intended to ensure participants were not disadvantaged in any way by agreeing to take part in the study.

It was critical that an appropriate level of consideration be given to potential concerns of participant's around anonymity and data gathering approaches were tailored to facilitate this. This was particularly pertinent as the author is a senior manager in the organisation of interest, therefore was concerned that subordinates may feel obliged to participate in the research, so this was a fundamental consideration for selection of tools for data collection. The assurance was given that all data collected would not be attributable and where this was not possible, all evidence tracing outcomes to individuals would be removed.

The use of a participant information and consent form was intended to ensure all participants' concerns were addressed and provide clear guidance about the voluntary nature of the study and explain the approach regarding anonymity and data retention.

Also to address the concern that subordinates may feel obliged to take part in the research or alter their responses, the researcher's direct reports were excluded for the interview part of the study.

Participants were also advised that the research outcomes were not expected to deliver recommendations for the business or linked directly to the organisation's goals, hence their responses would not be judged in any way as a measure of their performance. However, in recognition of people as social actors, it was not anticipated that people would necessarily accept this statement at face value, so where appropriate, the emphasis was on anonymity of involvement and outcome.

3.8 Summary

This chapter provides a detailed insight into the research philosophy and approach, giving an account of the thought processes used in their development. The research strategy and methods employed are discussed, with sufficient specific detail regarding the execution of the research to enable replication. Further evaluation is provided, looking at the limitations of the methods utilised and the precautions employed around data sense checking, through triangulation. Finally, the critical aspect of ethics is covered, ensuring that the research is suitably grounded within an appropriate ethical code. The chapter provides a roadmap to guide the research, the results generated on that journey will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 – Findings

"There are two possible outcomes: if the result confirms the hypothesis, then you've made a measurement. If the result is contrary to the hypothesis, then you've made a discovery."

Enrico Fermi as quoted in *Nuclear Principles in Engineering* (2005) by Tatjana Jevremovic, p. 397

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of the data generated from the research undertaken. The intention here is simply to present the results generated in a logical manner, providing analysis guided by the research question and postulated conceptual model (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The fifth and final chapter elaborates on this, with a discussion of the data within the context of the literature review and draws conclusions.

4.2 Case study background

The case study was carried out at Kingsland Grange, which is part of the Life Technologies Organisation.

Life Technologies customers operate across the biological spectrum, working to advance personalized medicine, regenerative science, molecular diagnostics, agricultural and environmental research and 21st century forensics. The company has sales of more than \$3.3 million, employs approximately 9,000 people, has a presence in 160 countries, and possesses a rapidly growing intellectual property estate of approximately 3,900 patents and exclusive licenses. (www.lifetechnologies.com/ 2010)

Life Technologies was created by the combination of Invitrogen Corporation and Applied Biosystems Inc in October 2008. The organisation is headquartered in Carlsbad, California and has developed the following mission statement:

'Shaping Discovery, Improving Life

Life Technologies enables people to accelerate scientific exploration, driving to discoveries and developments that make life even better.'

(www.lifetechnologies.com/ 2010)

Kingsland Grange is one of at least fourteen manufacturing sites globally and there are currently 110 employees on site. The products manufactured serve the life science industry and research community, so are utilised to analyze nucleic acids (DNA and RNA), small molecules, and proteins in order to make scientific discoveries and develop new pharmaceuticals. Kingsland Grange products also serve the needs of a growing area referred to as "applied markets," which encompasses the following:

- Human identity testing which includes forensic casework, data basing and paternity testing,
- Food and environmental testing which includes bio-security products needed in response to the threat of biological terrorism and other malicious, accidental, and natural biological dangers
- Pharmaceutical testing for Pharmaceutical quality assurance applications

Since October 2008 Kingsland Grange has experienced a significant period of change, with essentially two key drivers:

- Integration driven change, resulting from the merger which formed Life Technologies
- Customer driven change

The integration driven change, stems from the fact that Kingsland Grange needs to establish competitive advantage to maintain its position as a viable site within the Life Technologies Organisation. Also as that the new company is developing its own culture and identity this has inevitably required change across the organisation.

The customer driven change is primarily a result of manufacturing products targeting more highly regulated markets. The company's aim is to achieve lateral growth, by applying existing technologies in these markets, so Kingsland Grange is in the process of adapting to the rigorous requirements of its new customers.

4.3 Research findings

The research findings described in this chapter will be organised into three distinct subsets, based on the individual research methods utilised,

- Semi Structured interviews
- Documentary Research
- Observational Research

4.4 Semi structured interviews

The semi structured interviews were carried out between 1st March 2010 and 16th April 2010. In total 12 individuals were interviewed, which was just over 10 per cent of the total population of 110 employees at Kingsland Grange.

4.4.1 Participant background

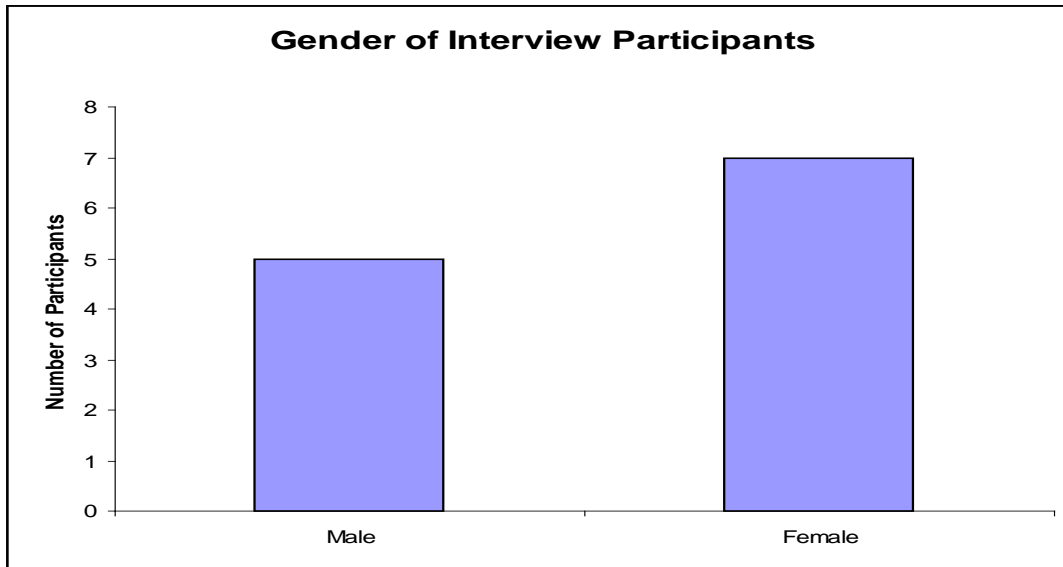
In addition to the interview questions, the following criteria were recorded to help contextualise the data generated:

- Gender
- Job grade
- Job role – manager or team member status
- Time with the organisation
- Age group

The data collected is shown in Figures 10 to 14.

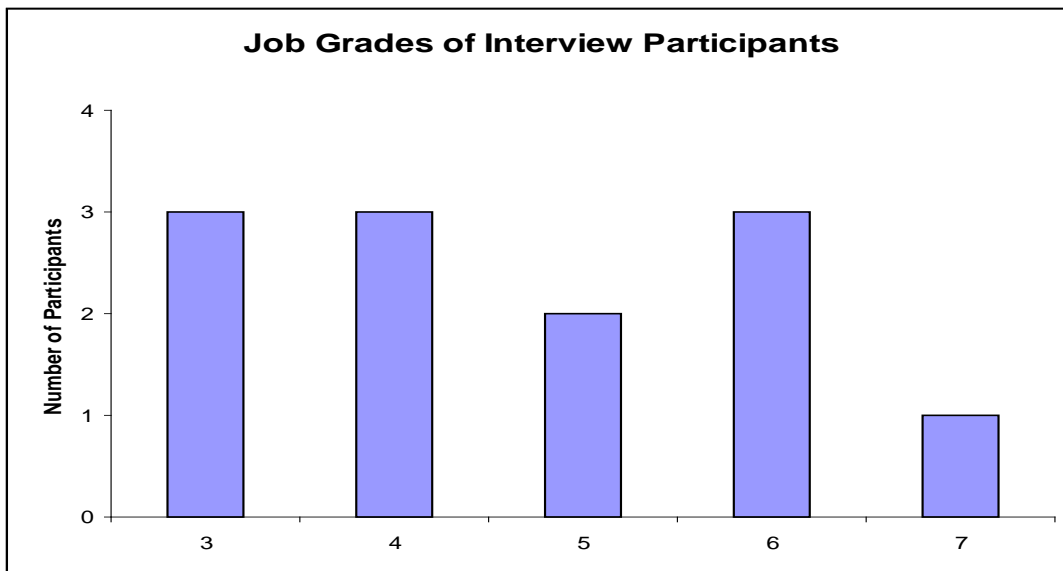
N.B: for reference raw data can be found in appendix 7.

Figure 10: Gender of interview participants



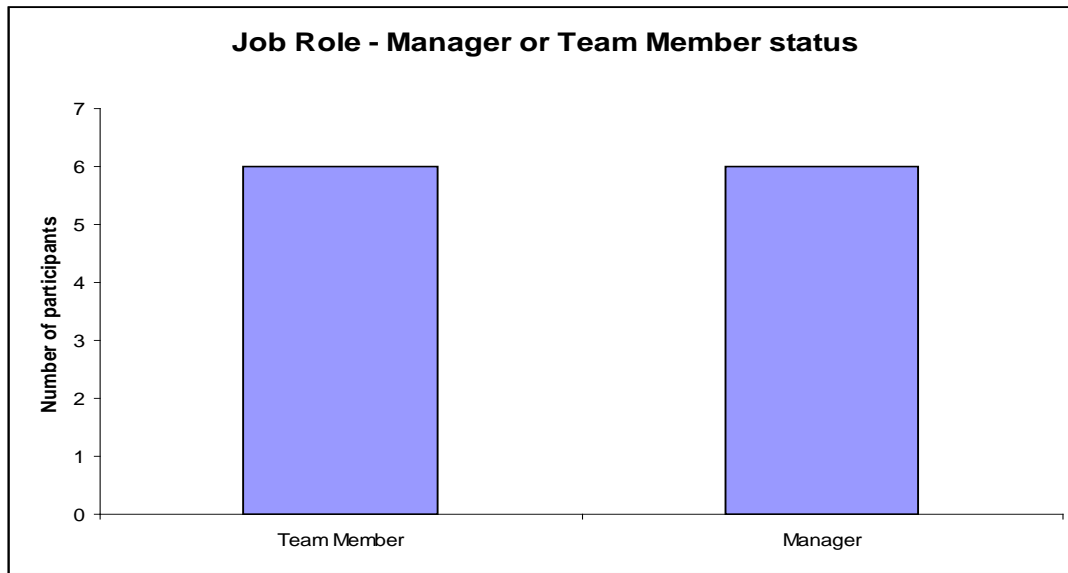
Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Figure 11: Job grades of interview participants



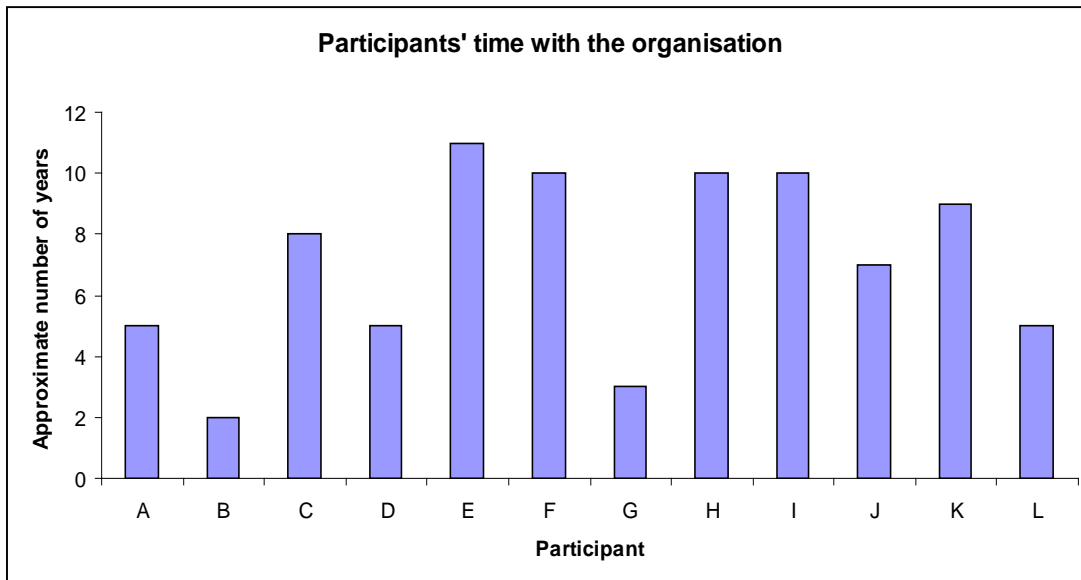
Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Figure 12: Job role of participants – manager or team member status



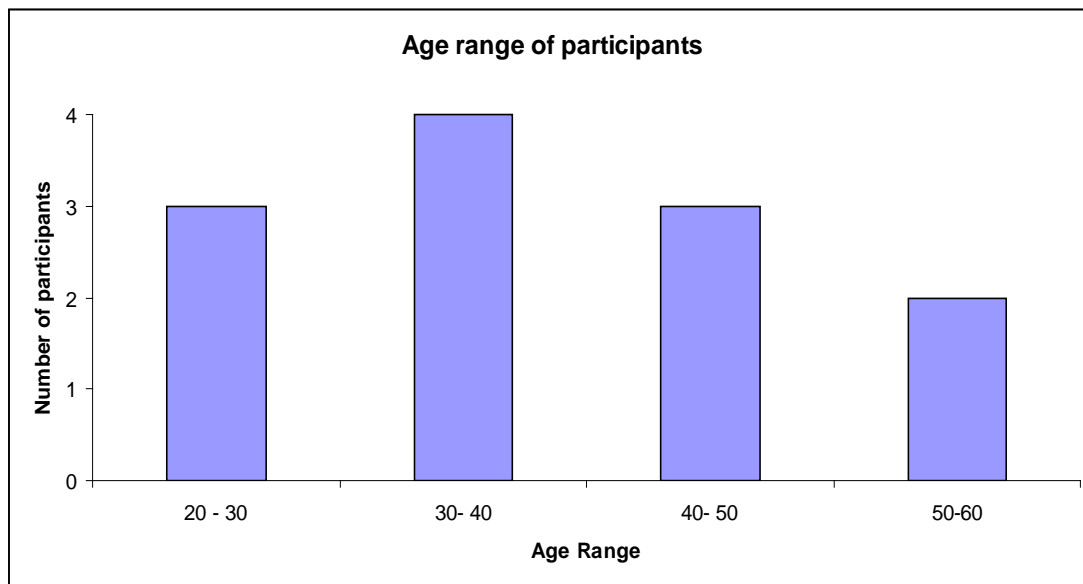
Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Figure 13: Participants' time with the organisation



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Figure 14: Age range of participants



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

The data shows a suitable balance of respondents with respect to age range, length of service, job role and grade which approximately reflects the current composition of the organisation. It is recognised that the female interview participants outnumber the males, which is not representative of the general population at Kingsland Grange, however this situation was an unavoidable consequence of excluding of the researcher's direct subordinates to overcome potential bias.

4.4.2 Interview responses

The responses to the interview questions were transcribed in a Microsoft Excel file, a system of colour coding and pivot tables were used to conduct analysis with reference to the participants' contextual information and the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). Where appropriate, summary data is displayed using bar graphs and pie charts generated in Microsoft Excel.

4.4.2.1 Factors effecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange

The first question related to specifically to the factors influencing employee engagement at Kingsland Grange.

Question1: What in your opinion, what are the main factors influencing employee engagement at Kingsland Grange?

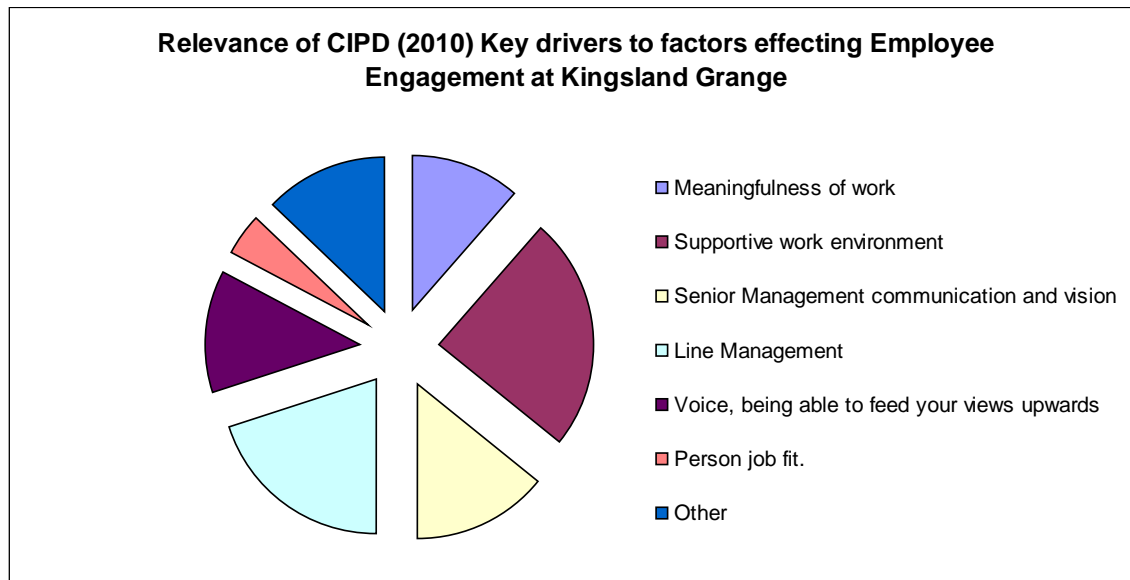
The responses were compiled and analysed using the CIPD (2010) model for employee engagement, which is a key building block of the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The model proposes six key drivers for enhancing employee engagement from recent research carried out in the UK, as follows:

- Meaningfulness of work
- Supportive work environment
- Senior Management communication and vision
- Line Management
- Voice, being able to feed your views upwards
- Person job fit.

The responses to question 1 were colour coded to indicate reference to any of the six drivers identified, with any responses not fitting into that criteria labelled as miscellaneous. Each individual point the participants made was treated as a distinct data point, so no limit was imposed on the number of times each participant could references each of the key drivers.

The analysis was used to develop scores against each of the key drivers, shown below in Figure 15, giving an insight into the relevance of the CIPD (2010) model at Kingsland Grange. (See Appendix 7 for raw data)

Figure 15: Relevance of CIPD (2010) key drivers to factors effecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

The analysis illustrates that all of the key drivers identified by the CIPD were represented in the interview responses collated at Kingsland Grange. The additional category of ‘other’ was added to cover responses which could not be categorised by one of the key driver headings. Although there are a number of responses listed as other, this in fact just covers one subject, reward and recognition. This was raised a total of nine times during the interviews, both team members and managers mentioned that they felt there was a positive link between reward, recognition and engagement:

Participant A (Team Member) stated that *‘people require appropriate reward and recognition for their contribution’*

Whilst Participant D (Manager) advocated *‘a fair and equitable system of payment and rewards, which is as transparent and open as possible, If people are getting more than they deserve it causes issues, which isn't good for working relations’*

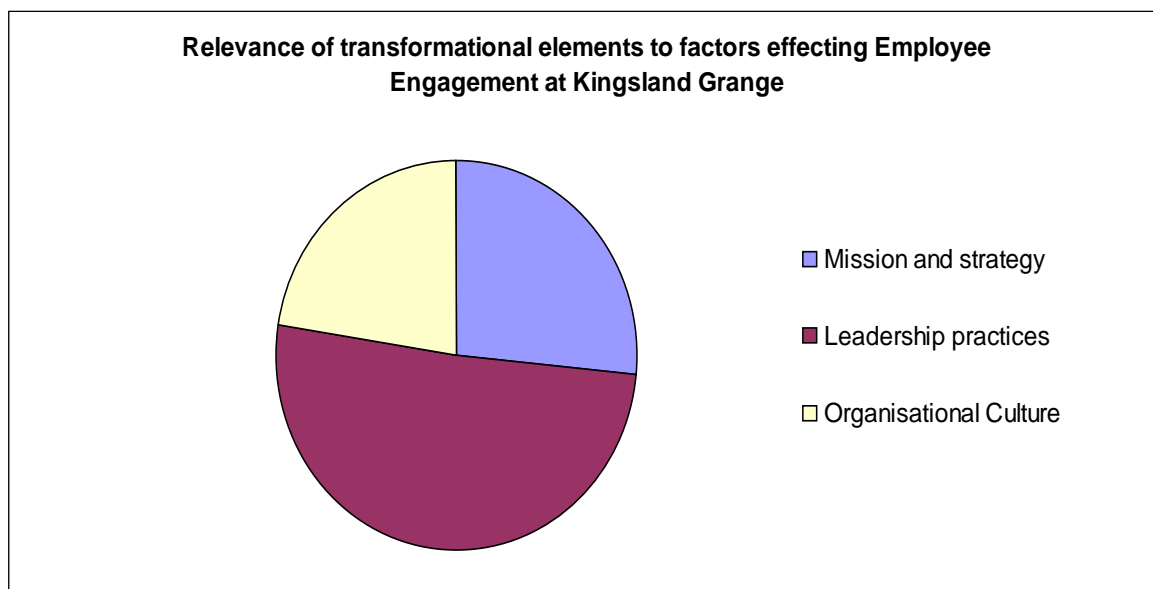
Only one participant dismissed the notion that reward and recognition impacts engagement.

Participant F (Manager) stated *‘I definitely wouldn’t say it was money or any other trivial stuff, like working conditions. There is lots of moaning and gossip, which I think is peripheral and subsides if you get the involvement’*

The data indicates that a supportive work environment and effective line management are considered the most important factors influencing engagement at Kingsland Grange overall.

The same data set was also analysed using the transformational elements of Mission and Strategy, Leadership and Organisational Culture which are directly linked to engagement in the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The results from this analysis are shown in Figure 16. (See Appendix 7 for raw data)

Figure 16: Relevance of the transformational elements to factors effecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

All of the elements were represented in the interview output. Although Leadership practices were clearly considered to be the most influential factor on engagement at Kingsland Grange, some of the views shared were:

Participant A (Team Member) stated that *'in fact my number one is actually an appropriate management style that suits the person.'*

Participant J (Team Member) recommended *'openness of management, so you can approach them with work related problems, not just shouting at you all the time'.*

Participant D (Manager) stressed the need for a *'trusted, committed inspirational senior management'*

Finally the data relating to employee engagement was scrutinised further, to establish any common themes.

4.4.2.2 Impact of employee engagement on competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange

All of the interviewees involved in the study felt that there was a positive relationship between employee engagement and competitive advantage. Although several respondents stated the results of enhanced engagement are somewhat difficult to link to financial performance. The potential beneficial effects of high engagement levels were identified as follows:

- Improved staff and knowledge retention,
- Reduced recruitment cost
- Reduce time spent training new starters
- Improved quality, less mistakes, so leads to fewer product recalls and reworks
- Improved productivity
- Better performance against business K.P.I's (Key performance indicators)
- Improved communication and interaction between groups.

The aspects around staff retention were deemed to be critical, with a number of participants agreeing that this is attributable to the nature of the Kingsland Grange's business.

Participant A (Team Member) felt that *'staff turnover has a huge impact on results, mainly through knowledge lost - especially harmful in our business, where quality is so key.'*

Participant F (Manager) said that *'We are a people driven business, so the nature of the job means engagement is key - If you compare with the automotive industry, which is more standardised our work is labour intensive and we need to get the best potential from our people'*

Participant E (Manager) explained that *'the business is knowledge driven, with highly specialised skill sets, therefore people are an important source of competitive advantage'*

The impact of differing levels of engagement across the organisation was also highlighted.

Participant L (Manager) had observed that *'one group might be impacted by another who are more or less engaged, this can cause issues and conflict if the standard isn't consistent. Therefore everyone's engagement can drop'*

4.4.2.3 Impact of successful change at Kingsland Grange

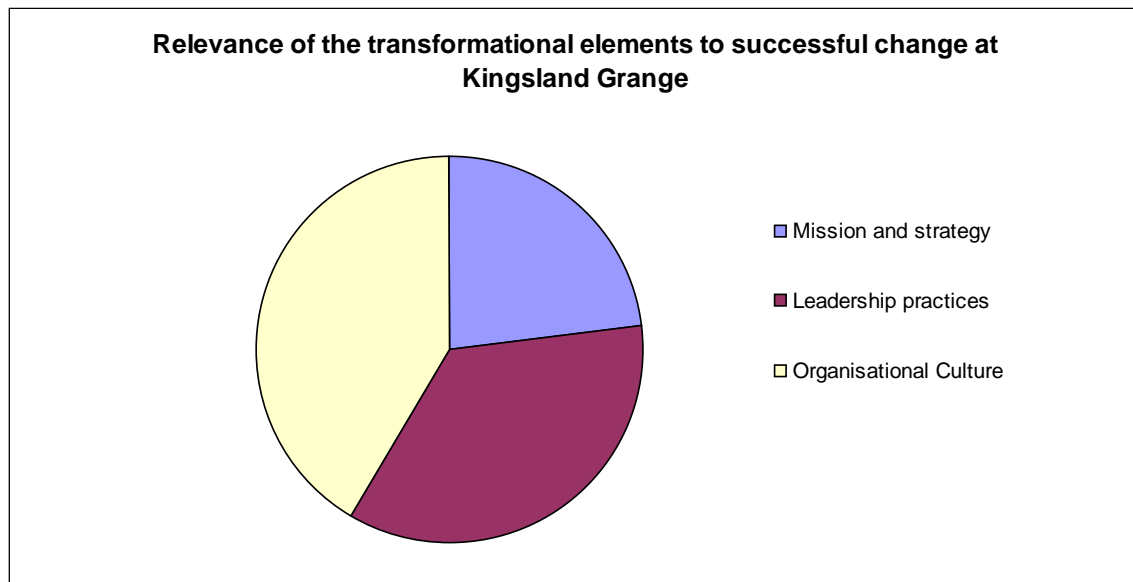
The interview participants were asked think of a specific example, were they felt culture change was carried out successfully on site. The following questions were then asked to explore the various scenarios in more depth:

- *Why do you feel the change effort was successful?*
- *How was resistance to the change dealt with?*
- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*
- *What was the impact on business results?*

It was noteworthy that only one of the participants struggled to think of an example of successful change on site and in fact, a number of the interviewees had a couple of examples to select from.

The data collated the first question on the reason for success was analysed using the transformational elements of Mission and strategy, Leadership and Organisational Culture from the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The results from this analysis are shown in Figure 17. (See Appendix 7 for raw data)

Figure 17: Relevance of the transformational elements to successful change at Kingsland Grange



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

All of the responses could be aligned with at least one the transformational elements identified in the conceptual model. The importance of organisational culture and leadership practices for successful change are apparent from this analysis, although the other aspect of mission and strategy was also mentioned by several participants.

The data was examined to assess if any trends could be identified in relation to participants roles in the organisation. In terms of organisational culture and leadership practice the team

members and managers were very closely aligned, with similar number of responses from each group. It was noted that the manager's responses were slightly biased toward the element of mission and strategy with comments such as:

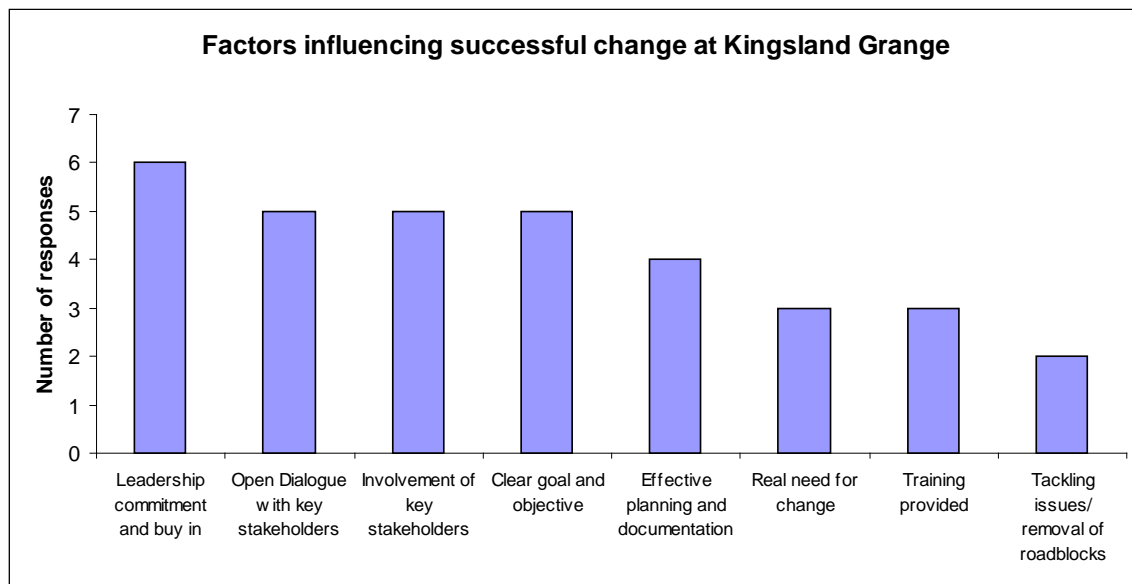
Participant E (Manager) claimed that a '*clear goal and objective was established*' helped to make the change effort successful

Participant F (Manager) explained that the change '*was a site priority and that was very visible*'

However it is critical to note, that the manager participant comments were only marginally higher for the element of mission and vision. Given the limited sample size, more work would be required to establish if there is any significance in this observation.

The comments collated during the interviews were analysed in more detail, to establish patterns in the data. The common themes were identified from the interview transcripts, then the number of responses generated for each theme, were counted and the results of this analysis are shown in Figure 18. (See Appendix 7 for raw data).

Figure 18: Factors influencing successful change at Kingsland Grange



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

In terms of resistance to a successful change, although some of participants felt resistance was minimal for their example, with one contributor even going as far as saying:

‘People at Kingsland Grange don't tend to resist, at least it is very passive’

Participant F (Manager)

Although not everyone agreed with this assertion, as the following comments illustrate:

Participant I (Team member) said *‘there was lots of resistance, we had lots of questions, we didn't think it would work for our system and the person who came to put it in didn't know our site’*

Participant G (Team member) observed that there was *‘definitely some resistance in the beginning’*

The comments relating to dealing resistance were analysed using the transformational elements of Mission and Strategy, Leadership and Organisational Culture from the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The results from this analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Dealing with resistance in successful change efforts.

Organisational Culture	Leadership Practices	Mission and Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team spirit helped quash resistance - People felt involved, so not at all threatened by progress - We collectively improved the system to make it easier - Feedback on the scheduling of audits has also helped, so people now have more notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roadblocks identified and removed - Leadership support - Leadership commitment - defined benefits help to focus people - I think people could see ' what was in it for them' - I think the training helped a lot - People were rewarded for getting involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistency of purpose - the momentum built up easily overcame it - Shared future vision was created - Helping people's understanding helped - Basically we had to get people onboard - People were open to it cause it made things better

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

With regard to successful change there were no additional factors identified which could not be aligned with the transformational elements, identified in the conceptual model. However one participant did make the following interesting observation regarding workplace change:

'I think some imposed change is probably for the best, Some changes have to happen and though people moan about it at the time, they often later realise that it was a good thing after all' Participant H (Team member)

The responses to the next questions:

- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*

were very much interlinked in most of the interviews, which is probably attributable to fact that the participant form and opening question both specifically mentioned employee engagement. Therefore, with so much overlap, the researcher made the decision to combine the responses to these questions, rather than struggling to analyse them individually.

Every individual interviewed, felt that their example of successful culture change, had a positive impact on employee engagement. The responses were compiled and analysed using the CIPD (2010) model for employee engagement, which is a key building block of the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The responses aligned with the six key drivers proposed for enhancing employee engagement from recent research carried out in the UK as follows:

Meaningfulness of work:

- *'People felt proud of the achievements'* Participant B (Manager)
- *'Employee commitment was enhanced'* Participant C (Team member)
- *'It created enthusiasm toward the work, which resulted in success'* Participant C (Team member)
- *'Increased ownership and engagement'* Participant E (Manager)
- *'It has created a focal point and people get it'* Participant F (Manager)
- *'So greater understanding, which in turn makes you feel like you're doing a better job'* Participant G (Manager)
- *'Feeling like you can make a difference and understanding why'* Participant K (Team member)

Supportive work environment:

- *'Less conflict'* Participant D (Manager)
- *'Less hostile working environment and increased trust and respect'* Participant D (Manager)
- *'Team spirit was established'* Participant E (Manager)
- *'People were prepared to work very hard to get the job done'* Participant E (Manager)
- *'Overall everyone has had a benefit'* Participant F (Manager)

- *'I think the investment in the site that followed gave people loads more hope'* Participant H (Team member)
- *'It was good, the group training really helped, it made people more positive and we all worked really closely'* Participant I (Team member)
- *'The group worked together and were able to help each other out, if someone didn't understand'* Participant I (Team member)

Senior Management communication and vision:

- No responses aligned

Line Management:

- *'People managers or line managers have been developed which helps with engagement'* Participant A (Team member)
- *'They were empowered to fix things'* Participant F (Manager)

Voice, being able to feed your views upwards:

- *'I think they were happy that it got talked about'* Participant J (Team member)
- *'Listening to the people who actually do the work always helps.'* Participant K (Team member)
-

Person job fit:

- *'It has had a definite positive impact; people are in the right roles'* Participant A (Team member)
- *Changes in roles increased flexibility* Participant L (Manager)
- *'There were massive improvements in people's awareness of what to do - what is the right thing'* Participant G (Manager)

Finally the interviewees were asked to give their opinions regarding the impact of successful cultural change on competitive advantage. Initially several participants stated that they felt that it was difficult to assess if there was a impact on bottom line revenue, but following a review of the competitive advantage definition they all agreed that successful change has

wider benefits that had in fact enhanced competitive advantage, The beneficial effects of successful change were identified as follows:

- Improved staff retention,
- Reduced recruitment cost
- Reduce time spent training new starters
- Improved quality, less mistakes, so reduced product recalls and reworks
- Improved productivity and turnaround times
- Enhanced revenue
- Better performance against business K.P.I's (Key performance indicators)
- Reduced pressure on staff

4.4.2.4 Impact of unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange

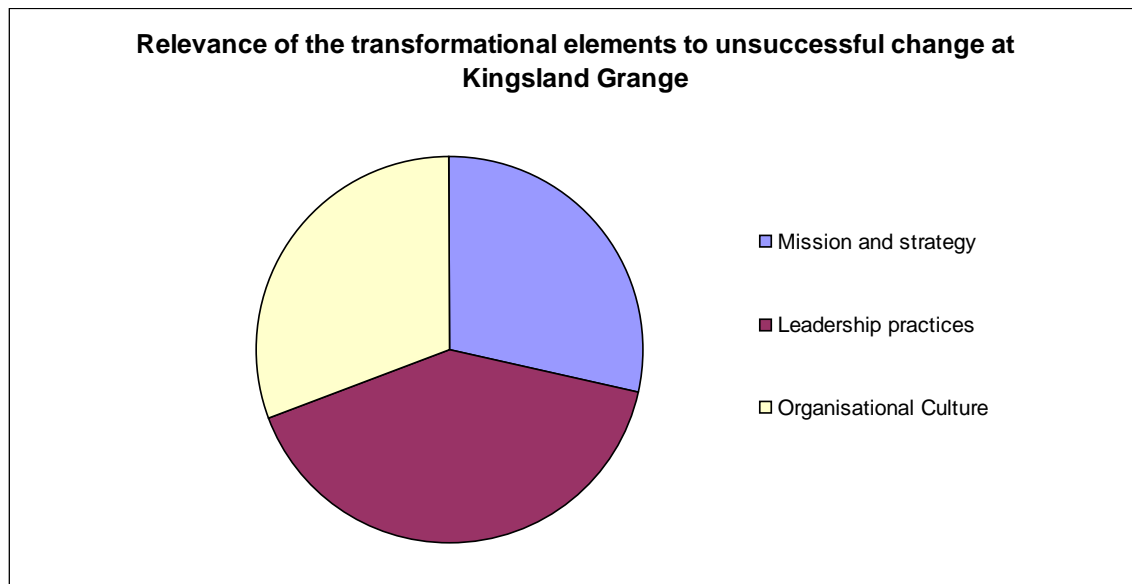
The interview approach was identical to one adopted for successful change, so participants were asked think of a specific example, were they felt culture change was carried out unsuccessfully on site. The following questions were then asked to explore the various scenarios in more depth:

- *Why do you feel the change effort was unsuccessful?*
- *How was resistance to the change dealt with?*
- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*
- *What was the impact on business results?*

In the case of unsuccessful change, none of the participants had any difficulty recalling a relevant example to discuss.

The data collated in answer to the first question regarding the reason failure was analysed using the transformational elements of Mission and Strategy, Leadership and Organisational Culture from the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The results from this analysis are shown in Figure 19. (See Appendix 7 for raw data)

Figure 19: Relevance of the transformational elements to unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange

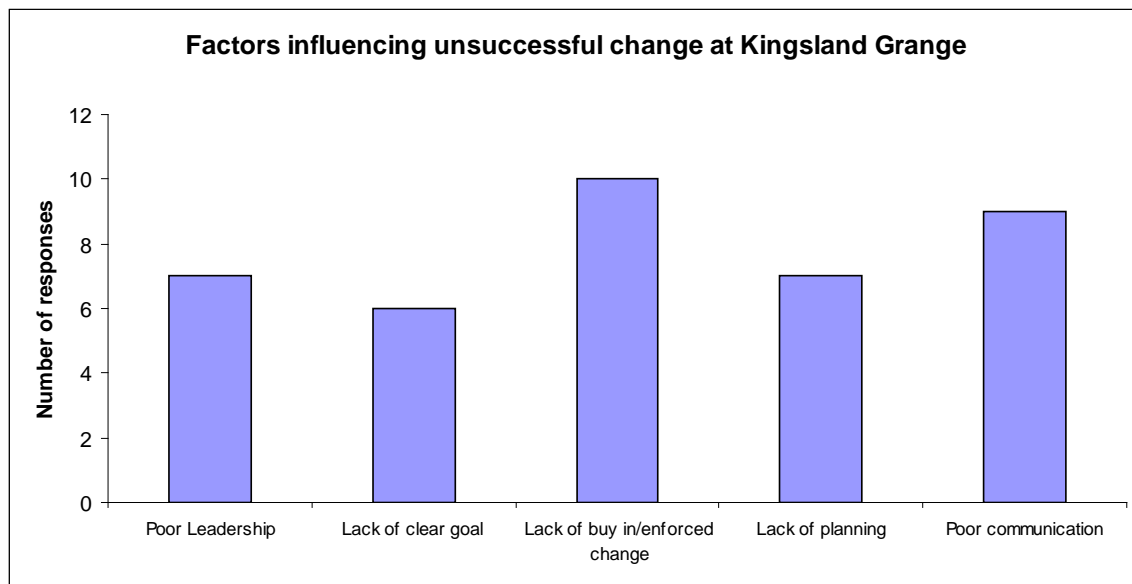


Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

All of the responses could be aligned with at least one the transformational elements identified in the conceptual model. The predominant impact of leadership practices on change, are apparent from this analysis, although the other aspect of mission and strategy and organisational culture were also frequently cited.

The comments collated during the interviews were analysed in more detail, to establish patterns in the data. The common themes were identified from the interview transcripts, then the number of responses generated for each theme, were counted and the results of this analysis are shown in Figure 20. (See Appendix 7 for raw data).

Figure 20: Factors influencing unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange



Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

With regard to dealing with resistance to unsuccessful change efforts, the common theme which emerged was that little, if anything at all, was done to deal with resistance. The following comments typify all the responses elicited to this question:

'No one did anything about it - ignorance is bliss!' Participant B (Manager)

'It was just forced through' Participant C (Team member)

'People complained a lot, but nothing was really done' Participant H (Team member)

In one case the resistance was not to the change itself, but to the way it was handled, indicating that improved or more considered planning and communication may have helped to reduce resistance in this example.

As before the responses for the questions regarding the impact of unsuccessful change on employees were analysed together.

- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*

- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*

All the individuals interviewed, felt that their example of unsuccessful culture change, had at least some negative impact on employee engagement. The responses were compiled and analysed using the CIPD (2010) model for employee engagement, which is a key building block of the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The responses aligned with the six key drivers proposed for enhancing employee engagement from recent research carried out in the UK as follows:

Meaningfulness of work:

- *'It is pretty far reaching really. The meeting is not having a valuable contribution. Essentially it is a bad use of time'* Participant A (Team member)
- *'They were not in control of their work and priorities for other things'* Participant G (Manager)

Supportive work environment:

- *'It would have a bad effect on any new team members, it would be challenging and difficult to facilitate change'* Participant A (Team member)
- *'Employees felt undermined, which resulted in a negative working environment'* Participant B (Manager)
- *'Colleagues became less willing to share information'* Participant B (Manager)
- *'Chaos and panic ensued'* Participant C (Team member)
- *'People were demoralised, especially the weaker staff, people started job hunting'* Participant C (Team member)
- *'People became cynical, felt disillusioned and became less trusting'* Participant D (Manager)
- *'People felt excluded, so felt threatened and angry and became very frustrated'* Participant E (Manager)
- *'For that specific time it made people very frustrated'* Participant G (Manager)
- *'People switched off and just did the minimum, also some people left'* Participant J (Team member)

- *'People have long memories for stuff like that. X still says he will never get involved in anything again, because everyone else on the project got an award and he didn't and that was nearly 10 years ago. I've told him that is no way to think though, but he won't listen'*
Participant I (Team member)
- *'It has annoyed people, they know it isn't helpful and just made more work.'* Participant L (Manager)

Senior Management communication and vision:

- *'Change was consider to be unfair'* Participant B (Manager)
- *'They were left to carry on when there was no one left to inspire the vision, so that led to frustration'.* Participant F (Manager)
- *'Also because manager X made me feel stupid I became reluctant to ask questions in future meetings'* Participant I (Team member)
- *'People felt let down and now think ' here we go again' when they are told something new is coming in'* Participant I (Team member)

Line Management:

- No responses aligned

Voice, being able to feed your views upwards:

- *'80% felt left out, not really part of the party and very much that things were been done to them not with them'* Participant F (Manager)
- *Staff voice was ignored, so the system failed'* Participant L (Manager)
- *'It is a classic example of not taking the opinions of the people in the know on board'*
Participant K (Team member)

Person job fit:

- *'That wouldn't have happened before because I had the experience to check those kind off details'* Participant H (Team member)

Finally, the interviewees were asked to give their opinions regarding the impact of unsuccessful cultural change on competitive advantage. All of the participants felt there would be some negative impact and the responses can be summarised as follows:

- Less visibility and clarity with regard to goals and direction,
- Negative impact on employee attitudes
- Increase in issues not reported and dealt with
- Increase in staff turnover
- Increase in recruitment costs and time spent training new starters
- Increase in customer dissatisfaction
- Reduced productivity and turnaround times
- Increased pressure on staff
- Reduced confidence in the QMS (Quality Management system)
- Increase in overtime costs.

4.5 Documentary research

The data from the Kingsland Grange's "All employee survey", along with statistics relating to employee retention and sick leave are presented as secondary data relating to the research question.

4.5.1 Employee survey data

The data from the surveys carried out in April 2009 and October 2009 are included in the study.

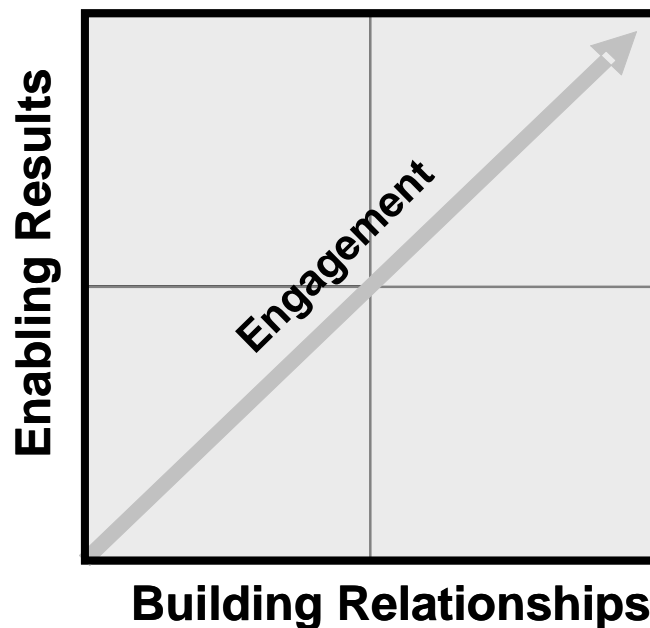
The survey results are presented in terms of an engagement score, which is made up of the following factors:

- I feel proud to work for Life Technologies
- I am motivated to go above and beyond what is required of me in more job

- I would recommend Life Technologies as a great place to work
- Even if I were offered a comparable position with similar pay and benefits at another company. I would stay at Life Technologies.

The factors which influence engagement are classified as enabling results and building relationships, which interact as shown in figure 21.

Figure 21: Employee Survey Engagement framework:



(Life Technologies, 2009)

These factors are further broken down as follows:

Table 2: Employee Survey Engagement framework:

Enabling Results	Building Relationships
Growth and Development	Significance of work
Tools and Resources	Work life balance and wellness
Communication and Direction	Value and Recognition
Collaboration	Respect and Integrity

(Life Technologies, 2009)

The framework was analysed using the CIPD (2010) model for employee engagement, which is a key building block of the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The framework aligned with the six key drivers proposed for enhancing employee engagement from recent research carried out in the UK as follows:

Table 3: Relevance of CIPD (2010) key drivers to Life Technologies employee survey engagement framework:

CIPD (2010) Key drivers	Enabling Results	Building Relationships
Meaningfulness of work	- Not applicable	- Significance of work
Supportive work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth and Development - Tools and Resources - Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work life balance and wellness - Respect and Integrity
Senior Management communication and vision	- Communication and Direction	- Not applicable
Line Management	- Communication and Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect and Integrity - Value and Recognition
Voice, being able to feed your views upwards	- Collaboration	- Not applicable
Person job fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth and Development - Tools and Resources 	- Not applicable

(Life Technologies, 2009 and CIPD, 2010)

The engagement score recorded for Kingsland Grange increased by 9% from April 2009 to November 2009.

4.5.2 Employee turnover and absence

The data for employee turnover and staff absence between November 2008 and April 2010 was reviewed. The data didn't present any trends that could be effectively linked to employee engagement without additional background research.

Table 4: Kingsland Grange labour turnover & absence figures November 2008 – April 2010

	Nov 2008	Nov 2009	April 2010
Labour Turnover (Industry Average of 16.23%)	3.66%	5.74%	2.88%
Absence Management (Industry average. of 3.30%)	1.92%	4.17%	1.37%

(KG Mgt Review data, 2008/2009/2010)

4.6 Observational research

The researcher maintained an account of key changes between January and April 2010 and even in this relatively short space of time several significant change were initiated or progress as displayed in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Change agenda at Kingsland Grange from Jan to Apr 2010:

Change	Classification
New customer requirements	Change to the external environment
Key supplier quality issue	Change to the external environment
Announcement of Buchanan project	Change to organisational culture
My path at Life	Change to organisational culture
Introduction of Life University	Change to organisational culture
ISO13485 Accreditation	Change to organisational culture
Shingo project	Change to organisational culture
Change in executive leadership	Change to leadership practices
Executive Leadership meeting held	Change to mission and strategy

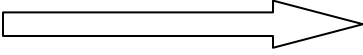
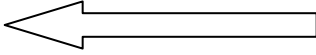
This substantiates the assertion that the Kingsland Grange is a rapidly changing environment, which was made in several of the research interviews:

‘the culture has successfully changed over the last 3 years.’ Participant A (Team member)

‘I’ve seen a huge culture change over the last couple of years’ Participant G (Manager)

The changes observed at Kingsland Grange were analysed using force field analysis as shown in Table 6

Table 6: Force field analysis of changes at Kingsland Grange.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Driving Forces:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Pushing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Restraining Forces:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Resisting</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive advantage in new environment • Focus on quality • Leadership commitment and support • Organisational learning • Resource availability • External change agent. • Potential customer audits • Economic security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural issues • Traditional ways of thinking and working • Lack of knowledge and experience required • Fear of the unknown • Perceived increase in bureaucracy • Failure to recognise the need for change • Departmental silos • Workloads and pressure of work • Existing organisational systems

(Adapted from Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008, p.527)

4.7 Summary

The findings and analysis from the research conducted were presented in this chapter. In the next chapter these findings will be contextualised using the literature review and conceptual model presented in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Implications

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the findings presented in Chapter 4 will be discussed in detail. Initially the researcher will present a critical review of the adopted methodology, indicating which parts of the research method were successful and if any aspects gave rise for concern or criticism.

The research aims and question will be reviewed in the context of the literature review and conceptual model developed in Chapter 2. The limitations of the work will be discussed in more depth and finally the researcher will conclude with an indication of any opportunities identified for further research

5.2 Critical evaluation of adopted methodology

The single case study approach adopted was reasonably successful. There were several clear benefits that became apparent; firstly it presented a ‘manageable feast’ based on the time constraints of the project and as the study was carried out at the researcher’s own organisation, there was an additional benefit that resources required for the research were easily accessible. Also, as anticipated, the fact that culture change is a prevalent theme at Kingsland Grange facilitated the research process.

However, there were some drawbacks to the single case study approach, in terms of the inherent risk of bias documented by Marchington and Wilkinson (2006). There was no opportunity, within the study, to test whether the researcher’s position of seniority within the organisation had any impact on the results generated. Also it was not possible to investigate some of the observed phenomena fully, for example the lack of success of the focus group approach.

The methods chosen to gather data were:

- Semi structured interviews
- Documentary research
- Observational research

The semi structured interviews proved to be very successful, they generated a wealth of data and the majority of participants provided very candid and detailed responses. The critical incident approach (Fisher 2007) where participants are asked to think of specific real life examples proved to be particularly useful. This generated useful insights, as many people spoke passionately and at length about the specific examples that were personal to them.

The pilot interviews carried out with several respondents in preparation for the actual research interviews were a worthwhile investment of time, in terms of refining the questions and enhancing the researcher's confidence that the approach was suitably aligned with the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). This aligns with Saunders et al (2007) who state that the key to successful interviewing is careful preparation.

The design of the interview questions illustrated the importance of the literature review. The fact that the questions were developed based on the existing body of knowledge and the resulting conceptual model ensured that the responses generated were generally highly relevant. An additional, unanticipated benefit was that the link to the conceptual model enabled the data to be analysed more readily, utilising the themes presented by the model to organise and display the data effectively.

The main drawback with the interview data related to the sample size. The time constraints of the project limited the number of interviews that could be carried out. Although broadly speaking the population involved in the study gave a representative view of the research issues overall, limited meaningful analysis could be done with subsets of that population, as the sample size was too small to draw statistically significant conclusions for differences or similarities between the groups identified in the contextual information gathered.

The approach to documentary research was to review data from the Kingsland Grange's "All Employee Survey", along with statistics relating to employee retention and sick leave as secondary data relating to the research question. The major advantage with this approach was that data could be easily sourced and used to provide an overview of trends in employee engagement at Kingsland Grange over a period of time. The "All Employee Survey" framework for employee engagement was evaluated in light of the literature review and was found to be suitably aligned with the CIPD (2010) model for employee engagement, which is a key building block of the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6).

The intention was to use this data to help contextualise the output from the primary research carried out using the semi structured interviews. The researcher had great confidence in the quality of documentary evidence collated because the employee retention and sick leave statistics are based on factual evidence. Also as the "All Employee Survey" is administered online by an external group, ensuring employee anonymity, potential sources of bias are removed and the data generated is reasonably accurate.

However, in terms of this study, the researcher felt that the secondary data should be approached with some level of caution. With regard to the employee retention and sick leave statistics, the researcher was mindful that these statistics are also heavily reliant on other factors, in addition to employee engagement, for example; instances of a genuine illness. In order to use this data to draw meaningful conclusions, additional research establishing links to employee engagement would perhaps make the data a more useful predictor.

Also in terms of the "All Employee Survey" the data available provided a retrospective insight into employee engagement at Kingsland Grange. It is noteworthy that employee engagement levels were influenced by many factors and no direct link was made to the potential influence of cultural change initiatives. However in conjunction with other data sources, the survey did provide a useful insight into employee engagement trends at Kingsland Grange.

The third and final method employed was observational research, this was simply an approach utilising primary observations, with the researcher recording a diary or timeline of events over a fixed period. This data provided useful insight into the pace of cultural change at Kingsland Grange, which could be used to validate the interview data generated. However, the case study could have been further improved, by elaborating on this data set to include additional research material, looking at the impact of each of the specific changes on employee engagement.

5.3 Conclusions about research objectives

The research aims and issues detailed in Chapter 1 were:

Research aims:

The research aim was to evaluate the impact of cultural change initiatives on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange.

Research issues:

- Analyse and evaluate contemporary thinking on the relevant aspects of cultural change and employee engagement, relating to competitive advantage
- Investigate the current approach to culture change at Kingsland Grange
- Assess the impact of cultural change on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange and if appropriate make recommendations for improvement.

This section will examine each of these issues and assess to what extent they have been addressed by the research undertaken.

5.3.1 Contemporary thinking on cultural change and employee engagement, relating to competitive advantage

The detailed literature review carried out in Chapter 2 examined the themes of cultural change and employee engagement, as they relate to competitive advantage.

Successful change is critical to business success according to Kotter (1996) and is linked to competitive advantage by Senge et al (1999), although many commentators report the challenges associated with execution of successful cultural change. (Senge et al, 1999. Armenakis and Harris, 2001). In response to these assertions, there is wealth of advice in contemporary literature relating to orchestrating successful change, including Beer and Nohria's (2000) Theory E and Theory O work and the eight stage process developed by Kotter (1995).

The literature on change frequently makes reference to people in the organisation, (Chreim, 2004. Vakola and Nikoloau, 2005) particularly with regard to resistance to cultural change (Proctor and Doukasis, 2003) and the potential reasons for failure. Vakola and Nikoloau, (2005) argue that employee attitudes towards change can impact their morale, productivity and turnover intentions. In addition, they report that evidence in change management literature supports the role of organisational commitment in employees' acceptance of change. Employees with higher levels of commitment; which can be linked to engagement, tend to be more amenable to change, providing there is a recognisable benefit. Miller (2004) asserts that change is ultimately all about people, arguing that if they do not change, nothing significant changes.

The benefits of employee engagement are documented prolifically (Kahn (1990, Schaufeli et al, 2007, De Mello e Souza Wildermuth and Pauken, 2008) It is linked to development of competitive advantage, with Macey and Schneider's (2008) claiming it drives bottom line results, through productivity improvements, increased sales, customer satisfaction and employee retention.

The link between competitive advantage and people in the organisation is documented in the literature relating to HRM (Human Resource Management), with effective deployment of HRM resulting in a powerful basis for competitive advantage (Barney 1995).

The review of contemporary literature provides evidence that successful cultural change and improved employee engagement have potential to enhance competitive advantage, resulting in the development of the proposed conceptual model, presenting a hypothesised causal relationship of the factors concerned. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6).

5.3.2 Investigation of the current approach to culture change at Kingsland Grange

The investigation of the approach to cultural change at Kingsland Grange was primarily conducted using the semi structured interviews. The questions explored the subject matter from two distinct viewpoints; looking at both successful and unsuccessful change efforts, aiming to provide a holistic view of the situation regarding cultural change.

The accounts of change solicited from the interview participants were analysed using the transformational elements of Mission and Strategy, Leadership and Organisational Culture cited in Burke-Litwin's (1992) causal model of organisational performance and change. (Hayes, 2007). In terms of successful change, participants cited factors relating to Organisational Culture and Leadership practices as paramount to achieving success. With regard to the responses for unsuccessful change, the predominant reasons for failure were aligned with leadership practices, supporting Kotter and Heskett (1992) assertion that a major factor in success or failure of change relates to competent leadership.

In terms of successful change more detailed analysis of the data, also indicated that leadership commitment and buy-in is critical. This analysis also presented a number of other factors identified as critical to successful change, which can be aligned with the process model for change management developed by Kotter (1995) as follows:

- Establishing a sense of urgency – real need for change
- Forming a powerful coalition – leadership commitment and buy-in

- Creating a vision – clear goal and objective
- Sharing the vision- open dialogue with key stakeholders
- Empowering others to act on the vision – involvement of key stakeholders, provision of training, tackling issues and removing roadblocks, effective planning and documentation.

Kotter (1995), Brophy (2010)

The first five steps recommended by Kotter (1995) are therefore evident in successful cultural change at Kingsland Grange. However there was no reference made to Kotter's final three recommended stages:

- Planning for and creating short term wins
- Consolidating improvements and creating more change
- Institutionalising new approaches

This indicates that these particular steps, may not feature routinely as part of approach to cultural change at Kingsland Grange.

Interestingly, in terms of unsuccessful change 'failing to get buy-in' was the most common causal response, (Brophy, 2010) indicating that initial failure to create 'the sense of urgency' (Kotter, 1995) may mean that a change effort is doomed from the start. The other reasons cited for failure of change efforts could also be linked closely to Kotter's model as follows:

- Failing to form a powerful coalition – poor leadership
- Failing to create a vision – Lack of clear goal
- Failing to share the vision- poor communication
- Failing to empower others to act on the vision – poor planning

Kotter (1995), Brophy (2010)

The responses for unsuccessful change were also devoid of any reference to Kotter's (1995) final three recommended stages, which corroborates the assertion that these steps may not currently feature in the approach to cultural change at Kingsland Grange. The fact that there

was no reference to ‘institutionalising new approaches’ perhaps suggests that the culture is continuously evolving, so the refreezing point is never actually reached. (Mack et al, 1998)

The observational research provided additional evidence, supporting the interview responses about the rapid rate of change at Kingsland Grange. The change agenda was analysed using Burke-Litwin’s (1992) causal model of organisational performance and change. (Hayes, 2007). The majority of changes could be aligned with the transformational elements of Mission and Strategy, Leadership and Organisational Culture, with the majority of change impacting the Organisational Culture. Additional change was instigated due to changes in the external environment. Further synthesis utilising force field analysis, (Johnson et al, 2008) explored the driving and resisting forces of these changes; this indicated that in every instance the pursuit of competitive advantage was a factor in driving the change. This supports the view that majority change efforts aspire to enhance competitive advantage. (Senge et al, 1999)

The study also explored the approach to cultural change resistance in the context of Kingsland Grange. There were mixed responses regarding the level of resistance experienced, although the majority of participants did not feel that resistance was a major issue. This is at odds with several literary accounts which state that resistance is a ‘common response’ (Proctor and Doukasis, 2003) and is responsible for much change initiative failure. (Vakola and Nikoloau, 2005). However the research did indicate that when resistance was encountered, taking action to deal with that resistance impacts on whether a change effort is successful. The approaches to dealing with resistance echo the recommendations in literature, in terms of building relationships (Vakola and Nikoloau, 2005) and ensuring facilitation and support. (Kotter and Schlesinger, 1979).

In summary the research provides an insight into the approach to cultural change at Kingsland Grange, exploring examples of both successful and unsuccessful change. The data generated supports the validity of the previously developed conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6), highlighting the importance of the transformational elements in

cultural change initiatives and establishing a link between cultural and competitive advantage.

5.3.3 Impact of cultural change on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange

The research showed that the factors impacting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange are closely aligned with those presented in the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). All of the factors identified as key drivers in the CIPD (2010) research featured in the interview data, although it was noteworthy that some of the factors were perceived to be significantly more influential in terms of their impact on engagement levels. This observation presents a potential opportunity for refinement of the conceptual model, by introducing an illustration of weighting of the factors influencing engagement. In terms of Kingsland Grange the research suggested that a ‘supportive work environment’ and factors relating to ‘line management’ were the most significant factors. The CIPD (2010) research cited ‘meaningfulness of work’ and ‘employee voice’ as most important. Therefore further research would be required to test out the variability in outcomes.

The interview responses also suggested that there may be some value to adding ‘reward and recognition’ as an additional key driver impacting engagement in the conceptual model to provide greater granularity, thus optimising the model’s validity. This supports the Saks (2006) assertion that reward and recognition is one of the antecedents of employee engagement.

The documentary research results from the “All Employee Survey” indicated that actual employee engagement levels at Kingsland Grange have increased in the face of continuous and accelerating change. The research data supported the hypothesis that cultural change has the potential to have an impact on people in the organisation. (Chreim, 2004, Vakola and Nikoloau, 2005). The findings thus support the assertion made in the contemporary literature that successful, well managed change has the potential to enhance aspects of employee engagement. Kotter (1996) refers to useful change that creates power and motivation

sufficient to overwhelm all sources of inertia, which can be linked to engagement as defined by Schaufeli et al (2002) as a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption.

The research evidence suggested that unsuccessful change efforts have the potential to detrimentally affect engagement, which aligns with Kotter's (1996) view that pessimistic and angry conclusions may be the result of unsuccessful change. The issues resulting from unsuccessful change examples were analysed using the CIPD (2010) key drivers for employee engagement, with the factors most significantly impacted been 'supportive work environment, employee voice and senior management communication and vision'. This supports Beer's (2001) theory that poor quality of upward communication is one of the 'silent killers' that block change and learning. (Hayes, 2007) and Saks' (2006) social exchange theory (SET) argues that relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal and mutual commitments as long the parties abide by certain rules of exchange, in a two way relationship between employer and employee.

The research also explored the impact of cultural change and employee engagement on competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange. The postulated causal relationship presented in the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6) was tested and the data supported the view that successful change has the potential to enhance competitive advantage, with potential far reaching benefits cited. This agrees with Beer and Nohria's (2000) view that effective change management has potential to enhance performance and several literary accounts linking employee engagement with competitive advantage. (De Mello e Souza Wildermuth. and Pauken, 2008, Macey and Schneider, 2008). The research data supported the view that employee engagement, which presents an opportunity for competitive advantage is more difficult to replicate than straight forward differentiators, like product and prices. (Macey and Schneider, 2008), pertinent examples of this at Kingsland Grange were aspects of product quality and knowledge retention.

Conversely the research indicated that unsuccessful change can result in a broad spectrum of outcomes, including reduced levels of employee engagement, which can erode existing

competitive advantage. The issues raised included increased costs and reduced operating efficiencies, so the organisation fails to add value (Thompson and Richardson, 1996).

5.4 Conclusions about the research question

The research question detailed in Chapter 1 was:

Have cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange enhanced employee engagement and competitive advantage?

The literature review was initially used to explore the research question, investigating the themes of cultural change, employee engagement and competitive advantage. This review enabled a conceptual model to be developed (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6) which presented a hypothesised causal relationship of these factors. The validity of this model and the notion that cultural change influences employee engagement levels and competitive advantage was tested using a single case study at Kingsland Grange.

The detailed discussion of the research issues in Section 5.3 examined the data generated in the context of contemporary literature and explored the validity of the causal relationship presented in the conceptual model. (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). The data supports the hypothesised relationships between cultural change, employee engagement and competitive advantage; indicating that successful cultural change can enhance employee engagement and competitive advantage and unsuccessful cultural change has the potential to have negative connotations for employee engagement and competitive advantage.

The case study substantiated the relevance of the research question, supporting the assertion that cultural change is a prevailing theme at Kingsland Grange. The site is striving for differentiation in an increasingly competitive environment and has identified cultural change initiatives and employee engagement as key aspects of this effort

5.5 Limitations

The limitations of the research mainly centre round the fact it was conducted as a single case study, which was discussed previously in Section 5.2. Essentially this meant that the as the research was limited to a single organisation, there was no opportunity to validate findings elsewhere, or assess if any of the data was influenced by researcher bias resulting from the data collection taking place in the researcher's place of work.

A further limitation recognised was the limited sample size included in the semi structured interviews, which was a result of the unavoidable constraints of the research timeline. This prohibited effective statistical analysis of data from subsets of the population, which might have provided additional insight.

Finally as a retrospective insight, despite the success of the critical incident approach used in the semi structured interviews, the researcher would suggest that this approach had potential to add a source of bias to the data. This is based on the fact that all the examples of change discussed were historical, so according to the Kubler Ross (1969) coping cycle, most participants may have already reached the acceptance stage for the change effort they were describing, so some of the emotions they may have actually experienced could have dissipated.

5.6 Opportunities for further research

There are several opportunities for further research arising from this work. The most obvious path would be to address the limitations identified in this study and expand the research to include different organisations and increased sample size to enable statistical analysis.

It would be interesting to test the causal model in different organisations, possibly looking at representatives from both the public and private sectors, where the approach to change and rate of change will inevitably vary. The investigation of an organisation with an established culture and low rate of change, which is the antithesis of Kingsland Grange's post merger state, would provide a contrasting view.

The proposed refinement to the conceptual model, introducing an illustration of weighting for the factors influencing engagement, would also be a useful area of study. This would need to establish that this is a valid addition to the model and then from a practitioner perspective, whether it has the potential to be a useful tool for direction of efforts looking to enhance employee engagement.

Finally with regard to cultural change initiatives, further research investigating the use of Kotter's (1995) eight stage model in practice would be useful. Exploring whether the situation of partial implementation observed at Kingsland Grange is typical and that using the model in its entirety has potential to enhance the success of cultural change.

Chapter 6 – Recommendations:

Although the expectation was set, that the research would not deliver a specific list of recommendations. Given the gravity of the research focus, the researcher felt it would be churlish not to provide some high level recommendations for future improvement.

From a purely academic standpoint the research has presented interesting opportunities for further study, which are outlined in Section 5.6, in particular it would be useful to test the conceptual model further (Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6), to provide additional weight to the postulated relationship between cultural change, employee engagement and competitive advantage.

Also with regard to the pertinent strategic question; how does Kingsland Grange maintain, and moreover enhance, its competitive advantage within the Life Technologies organisation? The research outcomes suggest that Kingsland Grange has a potential opportunity to improve its competitive advantage, through successful cultural change initiatives and improved employee engagement. Therefore, highlighting the importance of developing the ability to plan and execute successful cultural change, particularly as the reality at Kingsland Grange echoes Miller's (2004) assertion that change is changing – it is becoming more frequent, radical and complex.

In order to facilitate successful cultural change, the research evidence suggests increased focus on the leadership aspects to ensure individual initiatives are completed successfully. In addition to the opportunity to implement the use of Kotter's (1995) eight stage model for change, in its entirety, with the potential for improvement that brings.

Bibliography:

- Almarez. J (1994) Quality Management and the Process of Change. *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, 7, 2, 6-14.
- Armenakis, A.A and Harris, S.G (2001) Crafting a change message to create transformational readiness. *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, 15, 2, 169-183.
- Bakker.A.B and Schaufeli.W.B (2008) Positive organisational behaviour: Engaged employees in flourishing organisations. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 29, 147-154
- Barney J.B (1995) Looking inside for competitive advantage. *Academy of Management Executive*. 9.1. 49-67.
- Barney. J and Wright. P (1998) On becoming a strategic partner: the roles of human resources in gaining competitive advantage. *Human resource Management*. 37. 31-46.
- Beer.M & Nohria.N (2000) *Breaking the code of change*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Massachusetts.
- Bin Othman. R. (1996) Strategic HRM: evidence from the Irish food Industry. *Personnel Review*. 25, 1, 40-58.
- Boxall. P. (2003) HR Strategy and competitive advantage. *Human Resource Management Journal* . 13, 3, 5-20.
- Brewerton.P and Millward. L (2001) *Organisational Research Methods: A guide for students and researchers*. Sage, London.

- Buchanan. D and Huczynski. A (2004) *Organisational Behaviour, an introductory text*. 5th Ed. Pearson Education Ltd, Essex, England.
- Cartwright, S and Cooper, C.L. (1995). The impact of mergers and acquisitions on people at work: existing research and issues, *British Journal of Management*, 1, 65-76.
- CIPD Annual survey report (2006). How engaged are British Employees? Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, London
- CIPD Research Report (2010). Creating an engaged workforce. Findings from the Kingston Employee Engagement Consortium Project. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, London
- Chreim. S (2004) Postscript to change: survivors' retrospective views of organizational changes. *Personnel Review*, 35, 3, 315- 335
- De Mello e Souza Wildermuth. C and Pauken. P D (2008) A perfect match: decoding employee engagement – Part 1: Engaging cultures and leaders. *Industrial and Commercial training*, 40, 3, 122 – 128.
- Elrod. D and Tippet. D (2002) The 'death valley' of change. *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, 15, 3, 273-291.
- Fairhurst. D (2008) Am I 'bovvered'? Driving a performance culture through to the front line. *Human Resource Management Journal*. 18, 4, 321-326
- Fisher, C. (2007). *Researching and Writing a Dissertation: A Guidebook for Business Students*. (2nd ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Garavan. T.N, Costine. P, Heraty.N. (1995) The emergence of Strategic Human Resource Development, *Journal of European Industrial Training*. 19, 10. 4-10.

- Harris. L. C and Ogbonna. E (2000) The responses of front line employees to market-orientated culture change. *European Journal of Marketing*, 34, 3/4, 318-340
- Hayes. J (2007) *The Theory and Practice of Change Management* (2nd Ed) Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire
- Jamali, D., Khoury, G. and Sahyoun, H. (2006), "From bureaucratic organizations to learning organizations: an evolutionary roadmap", *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 337-52.
- Jevremovic, T (2005) *Nuclear Principles in Engineering*. Springer Sciences and Business Media.
- Johnson. G, Scholes. K and Whittington. R (2008) *Exploring Corporate Strategy* (8th Ed) Pearson Education Limited, Essex.
- Kahn.W (1990) Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33, 4, 692 – 724.
- Kingsland Grange Management Review Data. (2008, 2009, 2010) Life Technologies.
- Kotter.J.P (1995) "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail" *Harvard Business Review*, 73, 2, 59 – 68.
- Kotter.J.P (1996) *Leading Change*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA, USA
- Kotter.J.P and Heskett.J.L (1992) *Corporate Culture and Performance*. The Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster Inc. New York.
- Life Technologies (2009, 2010) www.lifetechnologies.com

- Luthans. F and Peterson.S.J (2002) Employee engagement and manager self-efficacy. *Journal of Management Development*, 21, 5, 376 – 387
- Macey.W.H and Schneider.B (2008) Engaged in Engagement: We are delighted we did it. *Industrial and Organisational Psychology*. 1, 76-83
- Macey.W.H and Schneider.B (2008) The meaning of Employee Engagement. *Industrial and Organisational Psychology*. 1, 3-30
- Mack. D.A , Nelson. D.L and Campbell Quick. J (1998) The stress of organisational change: a dynamic process model. *Applied Psychology: An International review*, 47, 2, 219-232
- MacLeod, D. and Clarke, N. (2009) *Engaging for success: enhancing performance through employee engagement*. London: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.
(<http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/employment/employee-engagement/index.html>)
- Marchington. M and Wilkinson. A (2006), *Human resource management at work. People management and development* (3rd ed.). Chartered Institute of Personnel Development.
- Marcum.J.W (2000) Out with motivation, in with engagement. *National Productivity Review*, 18, 4, 57- 60.
- May.D.R, Gilson, R.L and Harter,L..M. (2004) The psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*. 77, 1, 11-37.
- Medlin. B and Green Jr.K.W (2009) Enhancing performance through goal setting, engagement and optimism. *Industrial Management & Data systems*, 109, 7, 943 – 956

- Miller.D (2004) *Building sustainable change capability*. Industrial and Commercial Training, 36, 1, 9 -12.
- Millward.L and Kyriakidou. O (2004) Linking pre- and post-merger identities through the concept of career. *Career Development International*. 9, 1. 12-27
- Mintzberg, H. (2004) *Managers not MBAs*. Berrett Koehler Publishers Inc, San Francisco.
- Mintzberg, H, Ahlstrand, B and Lampel, J. (1998) *Strategy Safari*. Hemel Hempstead, Prentice Hall. Europe
- Paauwe. J and Boselie. P (2003) Challenging ‘strategic HRM’ and the relevance of the Institutional setting. *Human Resource Management Journal*. 13, 3. 55-70.
- Piersol.B (2007) Employee Engagement and power to the edge. *Performance improvement*, 46, 4, 30 – 33
- Porter. M. (1985) *Competitive Advantage; creating and sustaining superior performance*. The Free Press, New York, USA.
- Proctor.T and Doukasis.I (2003) Change management: the role of internal communication and employee development. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. 8, 4, 268 – 277
- Purcell, J, (1999) Best Practice and Best fit: Chimera or cul-de-sac? *Human Resources Management Journal*. 9,3, 26-41.
- Rowley. J (2004) Researching people and organisations. *Library Management*. 15, 4/5, 208-214
- Saks.A.M (2006) Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21, 7, 600 – 619

- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research Methods for Business Students*. (5th ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Schaufeli. W.B, Taris.T.W and van Rhenen.W (2007) Workaholism, Burnout and Work Engagement: Three of a kind or Three different kinds of Employee well being? *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 57, 2, 173-203
- Schein, E. (1989), *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Senge P, Kleiner.A, Roberts.C, Ross.R, Roth.G and Smith.B (1999) *The Dance with Change*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing. London
- Shakespeare, W. (1968) As You Like It Act 2, scene 7, 139–143, Penguin Books, London
- Sherman. H. Rowley. D.J and Armandi. B.R (2007) Developing a strategic profile: the pre-planning phase of strategic management. *Business Strategy Series*. 8. 3,162-171.
- Snape. E, Wilkinson. A. Marchington. M and Redman. T (1995) Managing human resources for TQM: possibilities and pitfalls. *Employee Relations*, 17, 3, 42 – 51.
- Takaki.L (2005) Employee ownership+ accountability = competitive advantage: Precor drives organisational change. *Industrial and Commercial Training*. 37, 3, 145-149.
- Thompson. J and Richardson. B (1996) Strategic and competitive success: towards a model of a comprehensively competent organisation. *Management Decision*. 34, 2, 5-19
- Vakola. M and Nikolaou. I (2005) Attitudes towards organisational change, what is the role of employees' stress and commitment? *Employee Relations*, 27, 2, 160 – 174
- Vosburgh. R.M (2008) State- trait returns and one practitioner's request. *Industrial and Organisational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice*, 1, 72-73.

Woodruffe. C (2006) The crucial importance of employee engagement. *Human Resources Management International Journal Digest*, 14, 1, 3-5.

Appendix 1:

Pilot semi structured interview format:

1. How would you define employee engagement?
2. How would you define cultural change?
3. How would you define competitive advantage?
4. In your opinion, what are the main factors influencing employee engagement at Kingsland Grange?
5. In your opinion, does employee engagement at Kingsland Grange have an impact on competitive advantage?
6. Can you think of an example where cultural change was carried out successfully at Kingsland Grange:
 - Why do you feel the change effort was successful?
 - What was the impact on the engagement of employees involved?
 - Do you feel that employees' engagement levels were impacted?
 - What was the impact on competitive advantage?
7. Can you think of an example where cultural change was unsuccessful at Kingsland Grange:
 - Why do you feel the change effort was failed?
 - What was the impact on the employees involved?
 - Do you feel that employees' engagement levels were impacted?
 - What was the impact on competitive advantage?

Appendix 2

Pilot interview feedback:

The following comments were made following the pilot sessions:

Interview 1:

- The opening questions could be a ‘bit much’, gave the feeling of a test, so not really conducive to free flowing dialogue.
- Questions which asked for specific real life examples seem to provide a better approach

Interview 2:

- Using historical examples might enable people to be more open and honest, particularly giving answers to a manager.
- ‘Business jargon’ might be confusing to some participants, with terms like competitive advantage perhaps requiring explanation.

Interview 3:

- No major issues, once employee engagement was explained.

Interview 4:

- Some people may struggle with some of the terminology, if the survey is going to be representative of the whole workforce.
- It was a bit tough to think of useful examples at first.

Appendix 3

Semi structured interview format:

- Gender
- Job grade
- Job role - manager or team member status
- Time with the organisation
- Age group

Engagement: *Schaufeli et al (2002) engaged employees are anticipated to be highly energetic (vigour), take pride in and are enthusiastic towards their work (dedication) and will completely focus on the task in hand (absorbed) , ready to give their 'all' to their job and go the 'extra mile' to achieve success. (De Mello e Souza Wildermuth and Pauken, 2008).*

Competitive advantage: *Organisations that achieve high levels of differentiation, maintain lower costs and achieve operating efficiencies will achieve competitive advantage and earn profits higher than the industry average.*

Thompson and Richardson (1996)

1. In your opinion, what are the main factors influencing employee engagement at Kingsland Grange?

2. In your opinion, what impact does employee engagement at Kingsland Grange have on business results/competitive advantage?

3. Can you think of an example where cultural change was carried out successfully at Kingsland Grange:

- *Why do you feel the change effort was successful?*
- *How was resistance to the change dealt with?*

- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*
- *What was the impact on business results?*

4. Can you think of an example where cultural change was unsuccessful at Kingsland Grange:

- *Why do you feel the change effort was unsuccessful?*
- *How was resistance to the change dealt with?*
- *What was the impact on the employees involved?*
- *What was the impact on employees' engagement levels?*
- *What was the impact on business results?*

Appendix 4

Participant information sheet and consent form:

Participant Information Sheet:

Employee engagement: An evaluation of the impact of cultural change initiatives at Kingsland Grange.

Researcher: Mary Brophy

Invitation:

You are being invited to participate in a research study, which will contribute to the Researcher's MBA dissertation.

Please note that participation in the project is entirely voluntary and responses will be treated as confidential.

The following information will help to you to understand the purpose of the research, so please review it carefully before you decide whether to take part.

Please ask about anything that is not clear, or if you require any further information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The research aims to evaluate the impact of cultural change initiatives on employee engagement and competitive advantage at Kingsland Grange.

Why have I been selected?

As an employee at Kingsland Grange, you have relevant experience which will provide an insight into the impact of cultural change initiatives on the organisation.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether you decide to take part.

If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign this consent form. You will receive a copy form and the researcher will also retain a copy. If you do decide to take part, you can still withdraw from the study at any point, without giving a reason.

What will be my involvement, if I agree to take part?

The research interview will last about 30 – 45 minutes and will be based on your experiences of cultural change at Kingsland Grange. The researcher will take written notes during the interview

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. At no point will your identity be linked to any of the responses reported in the research notes.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The research will be written up as an academic dissertation. It will be stored in the archives of the University of Chester and will be available for inspection on request.

The Research outcomes are not expected to deliver recommendations for the business.

Who is organising the research?

The research is being undertaken as part of a programme of academic study at the University of Chester, leading to the award of an MBA.

Consent Form:

Employee Empowerment: An evaluation of the impact of Culture change initiatives at Kingsland Grange.

Researcher: Mary Brophy

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, with out giving a reason
3. I agree to take part in the study

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Appendix 5

Example appointment request for interviews

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Outlook window for an appointment request titled "Research Study Interview - Meeting Center Event". The window includes a ribbon with "Meeting Center Event", "Insert", and "Format Text" tabs. Below the ribbon are several groups of icons: "Actions" (Cancel Invitation, Delete, Forward), "Show" (Appointment, Scheduling Assistant), "Attendees" (Meeting Workspace, Check Names, Responses), "Options" (Show As: Busy, Reminder: None, Recurrence, Time Zones, Categorize, High/Low Importance), and "Proofing" (Spelling, Proofing). A status bar at the top indicates "Invitations have not been sent for this meeting. This appointment occurs in the past." The main content area displays the appointment details: "To: TBD", "Subject: Research Study Interview", "Location: Conference Room", "Start time: Tue 30/03/2010 12:00", "End time: Tue 30/03/2010 13:00", and "All day event" (unchecked). The body of the appointment contains the following text: "As discussed previously, you are being invited to participate in a research study, which will contribute to the Researcher's MBA dissertation. Please note that participation in the project is entirely voluntary and responses will be treated as confidential. Please find attached a participant information and consent form for review." Below the text is a placeholder for an attachment labeled "Participant information sheet ...". The window concludes with the text "Many thanks in advance, Mary".

Research Study Interview - Meeting Center Event

Meeting Center Event Insert Format Text

Cancel Invitation Delete Forward Actions

Appointment Scheduling Assistant Show

Meeting Workspace Check Names Responses Attendees

Show As: Busy Reminder: None Recurrence Time Zones Categorize High Importance Low Importance Options

Spelling Proofing

Invitations have not been sent for this meeting.
This appointment occurs in the past.

To: TBD

Subject: Research Study Interview

Location: Conference Room

Start time: Tue 30/03/2010 12:00 All day event

End time: Tue 30/03/2010 13:00

As discussed previously, you are being invited to participate in a research study, which will contribute to the Researcher's MBA dissertation.

Please note that participation in the project is entirely voluntary and responses will be treated as confidential.

Please find attached a participant information and consent form for review.

Participant information sheet ...

Many thanks in advance,
Mary

The text included in the invitation displayed above was:

‘As discussed previously, you are being invited to participate in a research study, which will contribute to the researcher’s MBA dissertation.

Please note that participation in the project is entirely voluntary and responses will be treated as confidential.

Please find attached a participant information and consent form for review.

Many thanks in advance,

Mary

Appendix 6

Interview timetable:

Table 7: Semi structured interview timetable

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Completed</u>
A	1 March 2010	10.00 – 11.00	CR	Yes
B	3 March 2010	3.00 – 4.00	CR	Yes
C	8 March 2010	10.00 – 11.00	Opp C	Yes
D	11 March 2010	10.00 – 11.00	CR	Yes
E	15 March 2010	2.00 – 3.00	CR	No
F	19 March 2010	10.00 – 11.00	CR	Yes
G	22 March 2010	10.00 – 11.00	Mezz	Yes
H	24 March 2010	10.00 – 11.00	CR	Yes
I	6 April 2010	10.00 – 11.00	Mezz	Yes
J	8 April 2010	10.00 – 11.00	CR	Yes
K	12 April 2010	10.00 – 11.00	CR	Yes
L	14 April	3.00 – 4.00	CR	Yes
E (Reschedule)	16 April 2010	2.00 – 3.00	CR	Yes

Appendix 7

Raw data from Semi structured interviews:

Table 8: Interview participant information:

Participant	Gender	Job Grade	Job Role	Time with the Organisation	Age grp
A	F	5	TM	5 years	20 - 30
B	F	4	Mgr	2 years	20 - 30
C	F	3	TM	8 years	50- 60
D	M	6	Mgr	5 years	40-50
E	F	7	Mgr	11 years	30-40
F	M	6	Mgr	10 years	40-50
G	F	6	Mgr	3 years	30-40
H	F	3	TM	10 years	50- 60
I	F	4	TM	10 years	20 - 30
J	M	3	TM	7 years	30-40
K	M	5	TM	9 years	40-50
L	M	4	Mgr	5 years	30-40

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Key:

F – Female

M- Male

TM – Team member

Mgr – Manager

Table 9: Relevance of CIPD (2010) key drivers to factors affecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange.

CIPD (2010) Key drivers	Number of responses
Meaningfulness of work	8
Supportive work environment	17
Senior Management communication and vision	10
Line Management	14
Voice, being able to feed your views upwards	9
Person job fit.	3
Other	9

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Table 10: Relevance of the transformational elements to factors effecting employee engagement at Kingsland Grange

Transformational elements	Number of responses
Mission and strategy	19
Leadership practices	36
Organisational Culture	16

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Table 11: Relevance of the transformational elements to successful change at Kingsland Grange

Transformational elements	Number of responses
Mission and strategy	11
Leadership practices	17
Organisational Culture	20

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Table 12: Factors influencing successful change at Kingsland Grange

	Number of responses
Leadership commitment and buy in	6
Open Dialogue with key stakeholders	5
Involvement of key stakeholders	5
Clear goal and objective	5
Effective planning and documentation	4
Real need for change	3
Training provided	3
Tackling issues/ removal of roadblocks	2

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Table 13: Relevance of the transformational elements to unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange

Transformational elements	Number of responses
Mission and strategy	12
Leadership practices	17
Organisational Culture	13

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)

Table 14: Factors influencing unsuccessful change at Kingsland Grange

	Number of responses
Poor Leadership	7
Lack of clear goal	6
Lack of buy in/enforced change	10
Lack of planning	7
Poor communication	9

Semi structured interviews (Brophy, 2010)